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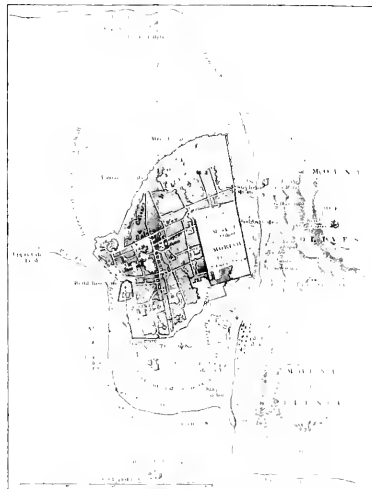
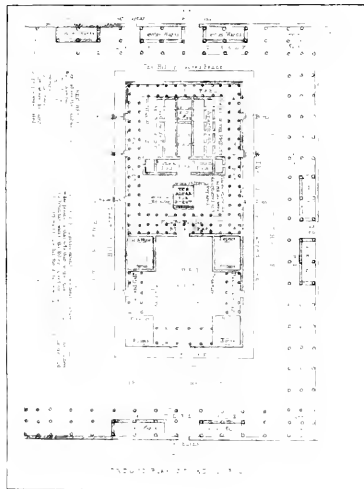
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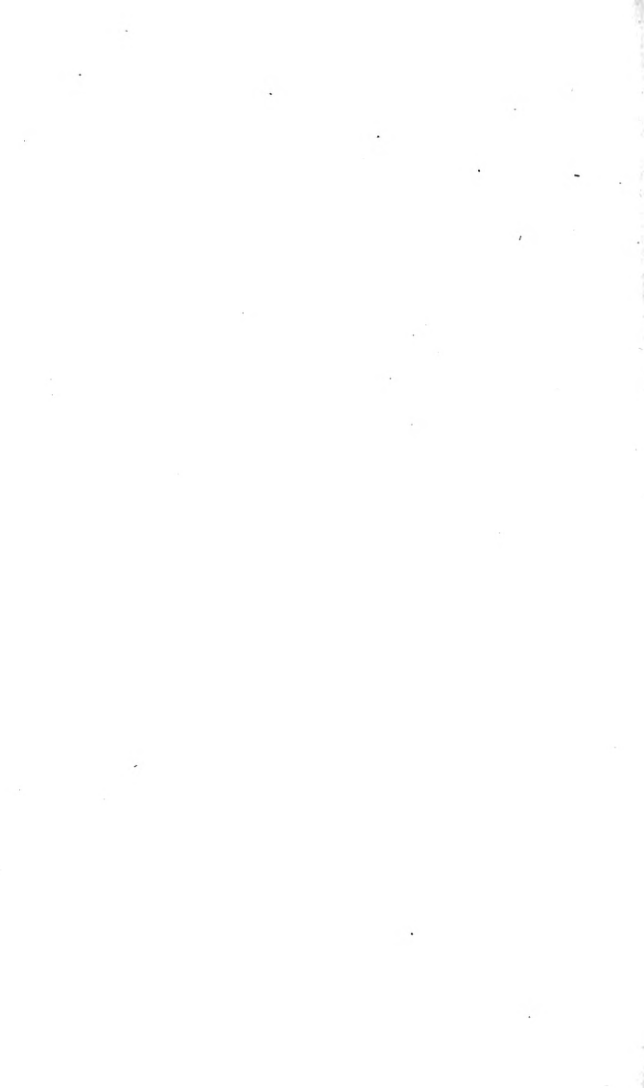


THE  
RITES AND WORSHIP  
OF  
THE JEWS:

AS  
DESCRIBED IN THE BIBLE, AND BY JEWISH WRITERS.



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CHAPTER I.

THE THREE DISPENSATIONS—THE MEANING AND  
ORIGIN OF SACRIFICES.

A RITE is a solemn outward act of worship. It is hardly necessary to say, that by WORSHIPPING, is meant showing honour and respect; and by religious worship, is meant endeavouring to show honour and respect to the Almighty Being, to GOD, who made the earth and all things therein, and to whom man looks with the hope and desire that He will cause his never-dying soul to be happy for ever. The BIBLE is the WORD OF GOD. It tells us about God. It tells us how God was worshipped in former times, and how he is to be worshipped now.

Three times or periods are particularly and separately mentioned in the Bible, called dispensations, in each of which it has been God's will that he should be worshipped in a different manner, as to outward rites. The first is the Patriarchal dispensation. This includes the period from the time when Adam and Eve left paradise, till the law was given from Mount Sinai. The history of the Patriarchal dispensation is to be found in the chapters from the third of Genesis to the twentieth of Exodus. The second is the Mosaic or Levitical dispensation. The account of this occupies the rest of the Old Testament, and also includes the history of the Jews till the coming of Christ. The third is the Christian

dispensation. The account of the beginning and early progress of this dispensation is given in the New Testament, and it has continued till the present time; nor is there reason to suppose that there will be another dispensation, or another method of worship appointed, before Christ himself comes again to judge the world. With respect to these dispensations, it is plain that the wisdom of God directs the revelation of such truths, and the giving of such laws, as are best suited from time to time to answer his merciful designs.

Any one who has read the Bible must have remarked, that the principal RITE of Divine worship, under the first two dispensations, was that of sacrifice. Some animal, or some production of the earth, was offered to God upon an altar, by some person whose duty and office it especially was to make the offering. The first particular account recorded of an offering or sacrifice, is in Gen. iv. When the offering was only placed upon the altar it was called an *oblation*. In a *sacrifice*, properly so called, the thing offered was destroyed, or something done to it so as quite to change its state. We cannot read much, in any part of the Bible, without meeting with frequent mention of the sacrifices, and of the rites and ceremonies with which they were offered. The book of Psalms, and the writings of the prophets abound with allusions to sacrifices, while the historical and narrative parts of Scripture relate instances of them; and the books of Moses contain full directions as to the manner in which they were to be offered under the second or Levitical dispensation. There are not such full particulars as to the sacrifices of the patriarchs; but enough is said concerning them in the book of Genesis, and in some other places, to give sufficient information both as to their origin and their object. They were memorials of the sin of our first parents, and of the way of mercy provided for Adam and Eve, and their descendants; and it is probable that these sacrifices were whole burnt-offerings, and that there seldom were any others till the giving of the law by Moses.

The sacrifices mentioned in the Bible were generally

made by taking beasts or birds of some particular kinds, depriving them of life in a solemn manner, and then burning their bodies on a heap of earth or stones, called an altar. As the sacrifices are mentioned very often, and evidently were matters of great importance, we will here inquire what was meant by them, and what first gave rise to them. Without stating the different opinions which have been given upon the subject, we may at once mention that which appears the only correct one, and give it in the words of a very able writer.\* He says, "It requires but very little acquaintance with Scripture, to know that it every where teaches us that man, by disobedience, is fallen under the displeasure of his Maker; that to be reconciled to his favour, and restored so as to be able to obey him in a manner he would accept, a Redeemer was appointed; and that this Redeemer laid down his life to procure forgiveness and acceptance for repentant sinners. This surrender of life has been called, by the sacred writers, a sacrifice; and the end attained by it, expiation or atonement." From several texts, particularly Heb. x. 1. 12, and ix. 9—14, it appears that this sacrifice, or death of Christ, was the real or proper sacrifice to which the sacrifices directed by the law of Moses alluded, or of which they were, as it is called, types or shadows; and since this was so clearly the case as to all sacrifices under the second dispensation, we are warranted in believing the RITE to have been ordained by God also under the first or patriarchal dispensation, as a type of that ONE SACRIFICE which was alluded to, or pointed to by all the other sacrifices.

That sacrifices must have been first appointed by God's express command, appears from their nature and design, which has been just stated; and also from the distinct

\* *Archbishop Magee.* On a subject of this very great importance, it is necessary to refer to an authority which cannot easily or effectually be disputed, and that able writer will be generally admitted to have been such. On other matters of less consequence, the authorities will not always be mentioned, as it is not desirable to encumber the pages of a little work like the present, with a parade of references and notes of quotations.

manner in which we read that God accepted them, when offered by Abel, Noah, and Abraham. In the book of Job, which probably contains the account of events that happened before the time of Abraham, we find that God expressly directed the friends of the patriarch to offer sacrifices, that they might be forgiven, when God was displeased with them because they had not spoken of Him in a right manner, chap. xlii. 8.

The first mention of sacrifice in the Bible, is that of Abel, Gen. iv. 4; and the manner in which the history is related, implies that there was a stated time for the performance of this duty, and that it had been often observed before. We must therefore conclude that Adam offered sacrifices; and it is generally supposed that the skins of beasts, which were given to Adam and Eve for clothes, Gen. iii. 21, were the skins of beasts which had been slain for sacrifices. It is not likely that any animals died of themselves so soon after their creation. If they were killed, it must have been for food, or for sacrifices, or merely that coverings might be made of their skins. Now it appears from Gen. i. 29, 30, ii. 16, and iii. 18, 19, compared with ix. 3, that animal food, or the flesh of beasts and birds, was not allowed to be eaten by man till after the flood. Nor can we suppose that Adam, immediately after the Divine displeasure had been so strongly shown, would dare to kill any of God's creatures without his leave. And it is not likely that God would order beasts to be killed merely for their skins, when man could have been clothed by their hair and wool, or by many vegetable substances. This would be unnecessary waste and destruction of God's creatures; we therefore may be led to believe, that beasts were killed as sacrifices, and we are expressly told that this transaction took place by Divine direction. Also here remark, that it is clear that Gen. iii. 21 refers to garments for Adam and Eve to wear.

As we are expressly told that the plan of redemption, by the death of the only and beloved Son of God, was determined from the beginning, we learn a very important lesson from this account of the origin of sacrifice,



which is applicable to the sacrifices of the heathens, as well as to those of the Jews. For the apostles, in their discourses recorded in the Acts, did not reprove the heathens for offering sacrifice, the RITE which had been derived from the common parents of all mankind, but for offering sacrifice to men of like passions with themselves, or idols, "vanities," "gold, silver, and stone, graven by art and man's device," Acts xiv. 15; xvii. 29.

The laying on of hands confessed sinfulness in the offerer, and desired that it might be transferred to the victim. The slaying of the animal that was sacrificed, gave an instance or example of that death which had been denounced as the consequence of man's disobedience. It exhibited an awful lesson of death which is the wages of sin, and at the same time represented that death which was actually to be undergone by the Redeemer of mankind. Hereby were shown at once the two great events in the history of man, the FALL and the RECOVERY—the death denounced against sin, and the death appointed for that Holy One, who was to lay down his life to deliver man from the consequences of sin. Thus the appointment of the sacrifice of animals seems to have been a very significant RITE; it contained in effect all the main facts of religious knowledge. And to adopt this rite with sincere and pious feelings, implied a humble sense of the unworthiness of the person who made the offering; also a confession that the death, which was inflicted on the victim, was deserved by the sin which had proceeded from man's transgression; and it also showed a full reliance upon the promises of deliverance made after the fall.

Doubtless some particulars of the death or sacrifice of Christ, were made known from the time when the Redeemer was promised, Gen. iii. 15; but, as this is not expressly stated in the Bible, it is sufficient for us to believe, that the sacrifice of animals was enjoined as a mark, or proof, that the offerer believed in the promised redemption or way of salvation, although without having a precise knowledge how it was to be accomplished.

We may now proceed to notice what is related as to the offering of Cain and Abel, Gen. iv.—why Abel's offering

was accepted, and Cain's rejected. Abel, firmly relying on the promise of God, and obeying the Divine command, sacrificed some of his lambs or kids, which he had been taught was a RITE that expressed his faith in a promised



Saviour. Cain, either cared not for this gracious promise, or was unwilling to adopt the method appointed for showing his belief of it. Probably he thought himself very wise, and that this method of worship was not necessary. He might think that he did enough, if he just acknowledged that there was some Almighty Being, and showed gratitude to him, by presenting some of those fruits and good things which were the products of God's bounty as the Creator. Thus Cain gave the first instance of that proud and presumptuous spirit, which has been so very common ever since. Men reject the word of God, and the truths revealed therein, because they do not, by their own wisdom, see why these things are right. It will be well for the reader to bear in mind, that not to believe what the Bible tells us about Christ, and the way of salvation through him alone, is in fact the very same in principle as Cain's refusal to offer animals in sacrifice. It is right to thank God for the daily mercies we receive. It is our duty and our privilege to bless God for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for his inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And when we think that general thank-

fulness is enough, or that our good actions are such as will procure for us forgiveness of our bad actions, we are very like Cain, when he thought that the fruits he had raised were a sufficient sacrifice and offering to God. All who act thus must expect to be rebuked like Cain, and if they refuse to attend to God's word, and will not have recourse to the appointed sacrifice, the Lamb of God, in the manner directed under the Christian dispensation, they will be rejected as Cain was.

Here the account of the meaning and of the origin of sacrifices may be closed. It is a most important subject; for all religious *worship* is, and ever has been founded on that great truth which is pointed out by it. These particulars were necessary to show the reason for the religious observances described in the following pages, the details of which may both interest and instruct the reader.





ABRAM'S SACRIFICE

## CHAPTER II.

## SACRIFICES UNDER THE PATRIARCHIAL DISPENSATION—PLACES FOR SACRIFICES.

THE sacrifices mentioned under the patriarchal dispensation are, the whole burnt-offering, the thank-offering, and the sacrifice by which covenants were confirmed. An instance of one of each of these will be found, on referring to Gen. viii. 20; xxxi. 54; xv. 9—17. By the account respecting the sacrifices of Cain and Abel, the latter being accepted while the former was rejected, we must infer that laws or rules had been given respecting such sacrifices, the want of the due observance of which caused the offering of Cain to be refused. But we have few or

no particulars of the ceremonies with which these sacrifices were offered. For the burnt-offering, the patriarchs raised an altar, or heap of stones or earth, on which wood was piled, Gen. xxii. 9. The animal being killed, probably its skin was taken off, the carcase laid upon the wood, and a fire kindled, by which the animal was consumed. Or the animal, if a lamb, may have been bound, laid upon the wood, and then killed. In the thank-offering, a part only of the offering would be consumed, the rest was eaten by those present, as when Jacob and Laban covenanted together and were reconciled, Gen. xxxi. We read in the margin of ver. 54, that they killed beasts and ate bread together; thus their meal doubtless was a feast upon a sacrifice. The heap of stones then raised to commemorate the event might serve as an altar. The offering upon the confirmation of a covenant is described more fully in Gen. xv. A heifer and a ram were divided, and the pieces laid apart, but opposite to each other. A similar sacrifice is mentioned Jer. xxxiv. 18, 19. In this case, the parties who covenanted, or agreed together, passed between the pieces of the sacrifice. By this ceremony was denoted, that if either broke the covenant, they might expect in like manner to be cut asunder by Divine justice. Such appears to have been the view taken by the Jews, and by the heathens among whom this sort of sacrifice was common. And in the account of Abraham's sacrifice, we find that a "smoking furnace and a lamp of fire" passed between the divided carcases, as a testimony that the Lord accepted the sacrifice, and confirmed the covenant. It is very probable that, in this instance and in some others, the offerings were consumed by fire from heaven, as a token that they were accepted; though that such was not usually the case appears from Abraham's carrying fire with him, when preparing to sacrifice his son. In the offering described Gen. xv. each sort of animal is mentioned that was afterwards directed, by the law of Moses, to be used in sacrifices.

The distinction between clean and unclean beasts before the flood, see Gen. vii. 2, has been noticed as a proof that a revelation had been made respecting an appointed

public worship, which is confirmed by the account of Noah sacrificing immediately after the flood, without any new direction: see Gen. viii. 20. The statement that Abraham kept the charge, commandments, statutes, and laws of the Lord, Gen. xxvi. 5, may also have reference to this subject, as the word rendered “statutes,” afterwards is applied to the rules, decrees, and ordinances about God’s worship. Although we have not a particular account of any ceremonies with which the patriarchs accompanied these offerings, it is very plain that they were seasons for prayer and thanksgiving. And if, as already noticed, there is reason to believe that the patriarchs had some idea of the nature of the Great Atonement prefigured by these actions, we cannot doubt but that they called upon the name of the Lord with a lively faith, upon these occasions, looking for the promised Saviour, and for the better country, the heavenly inheritance God had prepared for them.

A very minute and particular account is given in Leviticus, of the rites and ceremonies with which the sacrifices were offered under the second or Mosaic dispensation. These will be noticed when we describe the tabernacle and temple services; hitherto we have spoken of the nature and design of the sacrifices. We have seen that they distinctly had reference to the promised Saviour, and thus the first two dispensations had the very same object in view as the third; all true religion has been *the very same*, in its object and leading principles, from the time when our first parents were sent out from Eden, to the present day. It is necessary to state this great truth clearly, that we may not suppose there has been any change in true religion. In fact, there cannot have been any such thing as a *new true religion*. The promise directly after the fall, declared the Messiah, who was to destroy the power of Satan, Gen. iii. 15. The Lord Jesus Christ was the Saviour promised from the beginning; he is expressly called, “The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” Rev. xiii. 8; 1 Pet. i. 19, 20. Believers were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for

NOAH'S SACRIFICE.



ever, Heb. xiii. 8; the First and the Last, Rev. i. 17. The heathen used to choose new gods for themselves, and they do so at the present day; but the patriarch, the ancient Jew, and the Christian of every age, have had but one common religion, although, as to rites and ceremonies, they have been permitted, and even directed, to differ from each other.

Thus the bloody sacrifices, that is, offerings in which there was the shedding of blood, were made as acknowledgments of guilt; and presented evidence of belief in the pardon of sin, through a great Atonement or Sacrifice, of which these were emblems or types. Among the Israelites, only what were called clean beasts or birds were offered: among the heathen, other animals were also sacrificed, even those which the Israelites were especially directed to consider as abominations, and as defiling whatever they touched.

The bloodless sacrifices, or MEAT-OFFERINGS, were solely from the fruits of the earth. Here it will be well to remark, that the word "meat," as used in our English Bibles, almost always means food in general, or any thing that is to be eaten, not as we now usually understand it, only animal food or flesh-meat. This should be clearly explained to young Bible readers, as they often are puzzled by it; and some children have even thought it wrong to say what is called "the graces before and after meat," when they had not any flesh-meat for dinner. These meat-offerings were sometimes wholly consumed upon the altar, and then they were also reckoned as burnt-offerings.

DRINK-OFFERINGS were of wine, and only used with other sacrifices, part being poured over the victim or any other substance which was offered.

Those offerings which were not wholly burned, are to be considered as expressing thankfulness to God for mercies, rather than as representing or typifying the Saviour, the great sin-offering for the sins of the world; and further details respecting them need not be entered into in this place.

Thus the sacrifices, instituted from the fall of man, were intended continually to represent the Saviour as the Great



Atonement for sin, and the way of salvation, before he came upon earth. Since his death the sacrifices have been done away, as is clearly stated in the epistle to the Hebrews. The record of Christ, given in the New Testament, is so full and clear, that we do not need to have emblematical representations continually presented now, to remind us of his sufferings, their design, and of what they have accomplished. The spiritual sacrifice of prayers and praises, are what we are directed to offer under the Christian dispensation. But it would be wrong to suppose that this SPIRITUAL WORSHIP was less necessary, or less in use, under the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, than it is now. Thus the sacrifices offered by the friends of Job, were to be accompanied by the prayers of the patriarch for them, Job xlii. 8—10. Divine worship always has been the same in these respects, prayer for mercies needed, praise for mercies received; while, under the first two dispensations, there were also emblematical representations to be seen of the sufferings of the Saviour; and under the present dispensation there are clear accounts read and heard of those sufferings. Herein then there is an identity, as to the *method* of worship, as well as in the *object* of worship.

As every action of our lives calls for prayer and praise, so there is no place in which this spiritual worship may not be offered up. The apostle desired that men should pray every where, 1 Tim. ii. 8. Solomon, even when dedicating the temple as a special house of prayer for Israel, spoke of their praying elsewhere. Malachi speaks of incense, as a figurative expression for prayer, being offered in every place. Manasseh prayed in his dungeon, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12; and Jeremiah also, Lam. iii. 55, 56; Jonah in the whale's belly; the penitent thief upon the cross; Paul and the Syrian Christians on the sea shore. And as to praises, we find that Paul and Silas, at midnight, prayed and sang praises to God, not only in the inner prison, but with their feet fast in the stocks, Acts xvi. 24, 25. The example of Nehemiah must not be forgotten; he prayed while waiting upon the king of Persia at dinner, and his prayer was heard and answered.

Many other instances might be found in the Bible, but these are enough, especially when we refer to the example of our blessed Lord himself, who, though he often went up to the temple, yet still more frequently—

Cold mountains and the midnight air,  
Witnessed the fervour of his prayer.



In the days of the patriarchs, places were especially set apart for *public prayer and praise*; and we need not say there are such now. All heads of families, who are ready in earnest about religion, will also assemble their children and servants every day, and, if practicable, both morning and evening, for *family worship*; but these occasions do not render *private prayer and praise* less necessary. And as God is every where present, so no place can in itself be an unfit place to worship him. If any place is unfit, it is on account of what we are doing there, not from any other cause; and we might often be kept from improper company if we took time to ask ourselves, "Can I pray there?" Reader, depend upon it, whatever the place or company may be, where you feel that you cannot lift up your heart in prayer to God, you ought not to be *there*. If people would put the simple question to themselves, when going to the theatre, or any other place of sinful

amusement, "Can I pray there?" under the Divine blessing it would keep many from the ways and enticements to sin, who are not yet so hardened as to mock at the Divine precepts and counsels. Remember the first verse of the first Psalm, "Blessed is the man that standeth not in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

The places for public worship in ancient times we shall notice in another chapter; here we may say that, for private regular prayer, it is very desirable to have a place where we can pray undisturbed. Thus our Lord counsels to enter into a closet or private room, to shut the door, and there to pray, Matt. vi. 6; that the Christian may enjoy uninterrupted communion with his Father, and Redeemer, and Sanctifier, presenting his wants, and pleading for pardon and needful mercies. Some persons often make excuses that they cannot find a suitable place for private prayer; they may be told to "try," and assuredly they will find one. Nathanael seems to have found a place

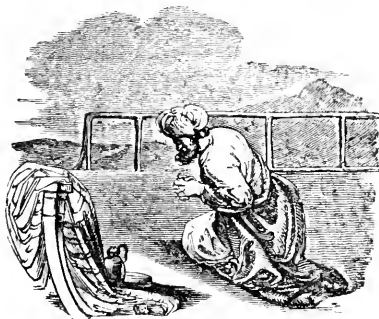


under a fig-tree, John i. 48. where no one could behold him but that Eye which sees all things. As to those who live in crowded cities, the story of the little boy, which the late Rev. L. Richmond used to tell in a pleasing manner, may give a useful hint. The boy was only nine years old, one of a large poor family. The reading of the

tract, called "The Negro Servant," had been made the means of teaching him to pray, as he said, "for God's Holy Spirit, and the pardon of his sins." He had learned to leave off swearing and other sinful ways, and prayed constantly. A gentleman asked, "How often do you pray?" He said, "At morning and night, and sometimes in the middle of the day." "How many rooms has your family to live in?" "One, sir." "How then can you pray in the middle of the day?" "I sometimes pray in the closet, and sometimes in the coal-hole;" was his simple reply. Yes, reader, God will hear the prayer, offered in faith through a crucified Saviour, though offered up from a coal-hole, as the poor martyrs, Philpot and others, experienced in Queen Mary's days, when they were confined in Bishop Bonner's coal-house, with their feet fast in the stocks. There Philpot wrote some of the beautiful letters printed in the "British Reformers." He says the day served them but little in that dark closet, yet he thanks the Lord that he was not alone, but had six faithful companions, who, with him, in their darkness, cheerfully sang hymns and praises to God for his great goodness. In another place, he says, "Though my lord's coal-house is very black, yet it is more to be desired by the faithful, than the queen's palace." And he mentions being carried back "to my lord's coal-house again, where I, with my five fellows, do rouse together in the straw as cheerfully, we thank God, as others do in their beds of down." Here may be added the story of a little boy, related by the Rev. S. Kilpin. One night he awoke about one o'clock, and said, "Mother, O mother, I forgot to say my prayers; what shall I do?" "Lie still, my dear, and say them in bed: it is quite dark." "What! say prayers in bed; that is lazy work." Out he sprang on the floor, and prayed.

As to places for prayer in ancient times, Daniel (vi. 10) prayed in his chamber, having the windows open towards Jerusalem. In Acts i. 13, 14, we read that the disciples, after our Lord's ascension, resorted to an upper room, where they continued in prayer and supplication. We read that Peter prayed on the house top, Acts x. 9. There were buildings for prayer, which will be mentioned

hereafter. It is clearly shown in the Bible, that, from



PETER PRAYING ON THE HOUSE TOP.

the beginning, places have been appropriated or set apart for solemn public as well as private prayer and other worship. The patriarchs, after the flood, placed altars for offerings upon mountains and in groves, and worshipped by their altars; and we may conclude that the same was done by those who lived before the flood. Noah built an altar to the Lord. Abraham built altars wherever he pitched his tent for any length of time, Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 4. He planted a grove in Beersheba, and there called upon the name of the Lord. From the manner in which the offering of Isaac was directed, Gen. xxii. 2, we may conclude, that then, as afterwards, mountains were sometimes resorted to for worship. Jacob called a place by the name of Bethel, or God's house, where he vowed to give to the Lord the tenth of the substance he might acquire, Gen. xxviii. 22; and we find afterwards, when he had forgotten or neglected to do as he vowed, the Lord reminded him of his engagement, and directed him to go to Bethel, to dwell there, and to make an altar there. These places were in reality similar to the houses of God, as the buildings for Divine worship, under the other dispensations, have been called.

It is evident, that the seclusion of a mountain or a grove is favourable for calling off the thoughts from the world and worldly objects, which is so necessary when man communes with his Maker; but the depraved heart of man, under the influence of Satan, continually perverts for evil that which has originally been directed for good. Even the idolatrous and heathen sacrifices were founded upon the great principle for religious worship, impressed on the mind of man, "that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us," Acts xvii. 27; but wicked and abominable ceremonies were connected with many of these rites, and the concealment afforded by a thick grove was favourable for the proceedings of those who changed the truth of God into a lie. We therefore find, that in the second dispensation, when God appointed a house or building for the ceremonial worship he then instituted, it was to be in the most public, open, and crowded place of resort. From that time the groves were strictly forbidden to be used as places for religious worship, and the Israelites were ordered to destroy them, Exod. xxxiv. 13; Dent. xii. 3. It has been said, that God would have no groves or thickets about his altar, that there might be no room for suspicion that any thing improper was transacted there. Every part of the Divine worship was publicly performed. And repeatedly, when mention is made of idolatrous practices, or the removal of idolatrous abominations, we find they were connected with groves. Thus, Gideon cut down a grove that was by the altar of Baal, Judg. vi. 25. Hezekiah and Josiah also cut down the groves, and Ahab's making a grove is connected with his doing more to provoke the Lord God, than all the kings of Israel that were before him. There are many other passages, both in the history of the kings and in the prophets, which speak of the groves. In some places, the word may mean the images of some of the false gods or goddesses; but as these were usually worshipped in groves, the distinction need not be gone into. We learn from hence how expressly the Israelites were commanded to avoid whatever had become an occasion of evil, although at first it might have been connected with what was good.

We find, from many accounts in ancient writers, that the heathen temples were often surrounded by these thick groves. At Daphne, near to Antioch, in Syria, was a magnificent temple in honour of Apollo, doubtless originally connected with the worship of the serpent, which became the resort of so many votaries and pilgrims, that a populous town was built in the immediate neighbourhood, and public games were celebrated. The temple and the adjacent buildings were enveloped in a wood of laurels and cypresses, which formed a thick ever-verdant grove, impenetrable to the rays of the sun, and covering an extent of ten miles in circumference. It became the seat of sensual pleasure, and all who desired to be esteemed as lovers of virtue avoided the temptations presented beneath its shades. But Christianity was planted at Antioch; the Divine blessing attended the labours of the apostles and their successors. The resort to this shrine, once considered as among the most elegant places of pagan devotion, gradually fell off; and when the emperor Julian resorted thither, eager to enjoy the pomp of demon worship, he found no hecatombs of oxen, sacrificed by a wealthy and zealous heathen people, as in former times, but a single goose was the only victim, provided at the cost of a solitary priest, who starved in this deserted fane. Herodotus describes the temple of Mercury, at Bubastis, in Egypt, as surrounded by a grove of large trees, the tops "reaching up to heaven."

The Jewish altars, under the second dispensation, sometimes were set up on hills and high places, but these were altars erected to the Lord in other spots than that especially appointed for the tabernacle and temple. We find Elijah, in 1 Kings xviii. 30. repairing the altar of the Lord in Mount Carmel, when he had that memorable trial with the priests of Baal, which clearly showed the Israelites the difference between an idol and the most high God. This altar, it is supposed, had been erected in the time of the Judges; and it is remarkable, that two Roman historians mention that Vespasian, the Roman emperor, went to an altar on Mount Carmel, venerable for its antiquity, where there was neither temple nor statue. At that time the altar

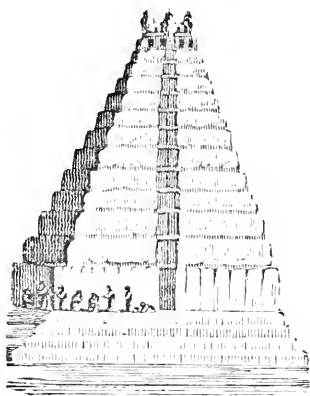
was used by a heathen priest ; but it probably was on the same spot as the one repaired by Elijah ; perhaps the same pile of stones ; and the remembrance of the wondrous manifestation made at that time, had prevented the erection of an idol near it.



It was unlawful to offer sacrifices in high places, after God fixed upon a place for his worship, Deut. xii. 2—15 ; and the persisting in so doing is mentioned among the sins of the people, 2 Kings xv. 35 ; though, before that time, there are repeated instances of the prophets and other good men offering sacrifice in high places and elsewhere. Thus Saul found Samuel in the high place of the city where he dwelt, and the tabernacle itself was removed to the high place which was in Gibeon, 1 Chron. xxi. 29. It is explained, however, that David's offering sacrifice at the threshing-floor of Ornan, was in consequence of the pressure of the danger not allowing him to repair to Gibeon ; and also because the Lord answered him there, and expressly commanded him to erect an altar in that place, 1 Chron. xxi. 18, 28—30. The sacrifice of Elijah at Carmel is sufficiently accounted for from the pressing circumstances of the case. After the temple had been erected, we find repeated instances of the kings and people, both of Israel and Judah, engaging in idolatrous worship, for which (1 Kings xiv. 23) they built high places ; these probably were lofty buildings, supposed to be of a similar character to that represented in the engraving, rather than buildings upon eminences, though



we read, 2 Chron. xxi. 11, of Jehoram making high places in the mountains of Judah. This pyramid is a representation of a high place at Tanjore. in the East Indies. The



desire of being nearer to heaven, while engaged in worship, seems to have led to the erection of the high places, whether only lofty buildings, or places on eminences, or both.

It has been stated, that the law given by Moses, forbade the offering sacrifices in any other places but the temple. And, in the history of Asa, his allowing the high places to remain is blamed, though there is no reason to suppose he sanctioned idolatry. But there was no law against the use of high places for prayer and spiritual worship, as we shall see when noticing the prosenchas of the Jews. Again let it be observed, that before the temple was erected, and the place the Lord should choose, Josh. ix. 27, finally pointed out, there are many instances of sacrifices being offered and accepted in other places besides the tabernacle: thus Gideon and Manoah, Judg. vi. and xiii.; and Samuel went to Bethlehem to sacrifice, when he anointed David,

1 Sam. xvi. 5. But when Jeroboam revolted from Rehoboam, and began rites of worship which soon became wholly idolatrous, if they were not so at the very first, we find that he made a house of high places, 1 Kings xii. 31, and his doing so is blamed. The temple had then been built.

Here may be mentioned that the stupendous pile, called Stonehenge, in Wiltshire, is thought to have been one of



these “high places,” where lofty piles of stones were erected for the purposes of sacrifice. Such erections, doubtless, have been in use from the days of the patriarchs. The altar erected by Moses under Mount Sinai, with the twelve pillars, according to the number of the tribes of Israel, Exod. xxiv. 4, would be like one of the erections which are called cromlechs, or stone circles, by antiquarians, as to general resemblance, but the purposes for which it was designed were very different. That altar was for burnt-offerings to the Lord Jehovah, and may be considered as uniting the patriarchal sacrifices with those of the second dispensation just then about to be established, and the pillars were in remembrance of the twelve tribes; but there is no doubt that the cromlechs were dedicated to the worship of Baal, or of the serpent, which, in fact, was the worship of Satan!

## CHAPTER III.

## THE JEWISH NATION—ITS RITUAL AND WORSHIP.

THE state of the world at the close of the patriarchal dispensation had become very awful. Idolatry prevailed in almost every part, and among every people, excepting the family of Abraham. The Egyptians were the wisest and most celebrated nation, the Assyrians the first powerful empire, the Canaanites the most warlike nation, and the Phenicians more engaged in commerce and foreign trade than any other people; but all these were corrupted by absurd and impious idolatries. In mercy to mankind, God at this period selected the family of Abraham, and caused it to multiply into a nation, among whom the worship of the true God should be preserved, whose history should exhibit an example of the Divine Providence continually superintending their conduct, and through whom the blessed tidings of the promised Saviour should be made known to all the earth. For this people, so chosen, a code of laws was prepared, which in every part had reference to the only and true God, who made himself known to them as JEHOVAH; a name signifying self-existence, eternity, and almighty power. When these laws were delivered to the nation, they began with a declaration to this effect; and in every part of these laws there are continual directions as to the worship to be rendered to Jehovah as their God. As the Hebrew government was arranged upon the system that the Lord was their King, therefore their desire for a man to be set over them, like other nations, is expressly said to be rejecting the Lord from reigning over them, 1 Sam. viii. 7. This form of national government is called a Theocracy, a name which implies the continual and manifest interpositions of Divine Providence.

The tabernacle first, and afterwards the temple, were emblematical parts of this peculiar system. That building was not to be deemed a dwelling-place for an earthly

monarch, but as a royal mansion, erected for their God and King, in which he was considered to take up his abode, as a supreme and almighty Governor among his subjects. To this place the people might always have recourse, to receive his commands, to offer their petitions, and to learn his will, while peculiar manifestations of his august presence were visibly made there. The sanctuary was, in consequence, splendidly furnished, and a numerous retinue of servants and ministers were always in attendance. Hence many of the peculiar rites and ceremonies under the Jewish dispensation, and the express directions that the ritual worship of the Jewish church should be offered no where but at the holy place. We must not, however, for a moment suppose, that the High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth all space, dwelt really, or, as it is expressed, *bodily*, in this habitation. It is true, He there gave a more visible manifestation of His presence than is now exhibited on earth.

In the tabernacle and the temple, a part of the sacred building was partitioned off. In this inner place was seen a bright shining cloud, which the Jews called the *shekinah*, the symbol of the Divine presence. It appeared as if resting between two figures, or angelic representations, called cherubim, upon an ark or chest, called the mercy-seat, Exod. xl. 34—38, and 2 Chron. vii. 1, 2, and at times it filled all the sanctuary. These holy places and their furniture, were figurative representations of heaven, of Christ, and of the worship of the church; and the believing Israelites were thus reminded continually of the peculiar dispensation under which they lived, having the presence of their Lord and God among them, in a symbolical representation, in a manner very different from what was the case with any other nation. Some writers, indeed, have said, that many parts of the Jewish rites and ceremonies, and even the form of the tabernacle, were copied from similar things among the Egyptians; but Witsius has fully shown, that not the least reliance can be placed on any statements of this kind; and that the Jewish ritual, with all its ceremonies, and restraints as to food, was very strongly contrasted to the gross inventions

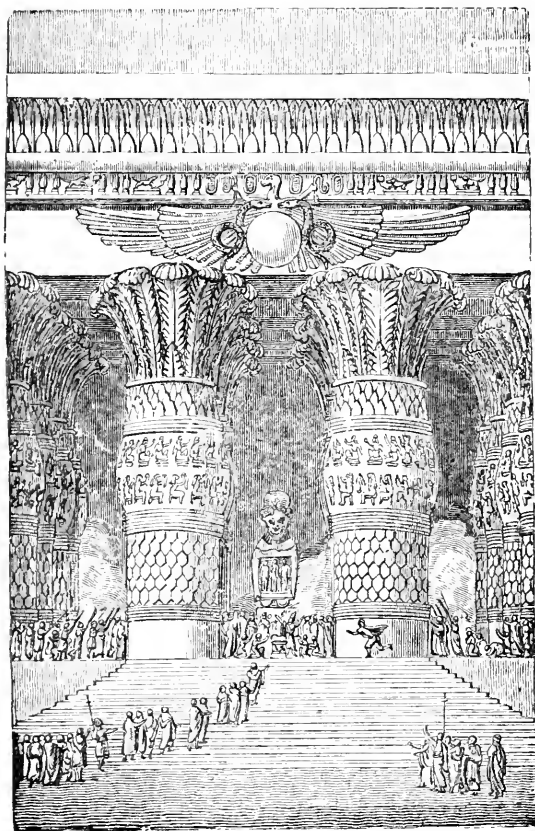
INTERIOR OF THE TABERNACLE, THE VEIL BETWEEN THE HOLY PLACES REMOVED.



of idolatry. It more opposed heathenism, and marked the peculiar state of the Jewish people more decidedly, than the simple and purely spiritual worship, which we shall hereafter see was also taught them, would alone have done. Thus Josephus says, that all their actions and studies, and all their words, according to the law of Moses, taught the Jews religious or pious feelings towards God; for He had left nothing of this nature undetermined. It is impossible here to go at any great length into this subject; and the English reader may refer to Lowman and Dean Graves; they say quite enough to silence the cavils of those who think that the Jewish ritual, so expressly directed by the holy Lord God, could in any respect be derived from the vile human inventions of idolatry, which, in fact, in many instances, were bad imitations of some parts of the patriarchal and Mosaic institutions. But the annexed representation of an Egyptian temple, when compared with the delineations of the Jewish tabernacle, sufficiently shows that they possessed little or nothing in common. Surely it is far more probable, that the Egyptians should derive a part of their rites from patriarchal traditions, or from the influence and services of Joseph and his brethren, during the time of their power and popular favour, than to suppose that the Israelites followed the rites of a nation, whose chief deity was an ox, and their inferior ones, cats and onions!

Here then we arrive at the conclusion, that the Jewish WORSHIP was two-fold.

1. There was a *ritual worship*, in which they recognised God's peculiar dealings with them as a nation, and by a number of rites and ceremonies, testified their sense of his favours; while these rites continually pointed the attention of the worshipper to the promises of that great Saviour who should come among them at the appointed time. This was the tabernacle or temple worship, with the sacrifices and offerings; and every ceremony connected therewith gave some useful instruction, or would help to guard against idolatry, while it prepared for the more perfect and spiritual state of religion under the Messiah.



AN EGYPTIAN TEMPLE.

2. There was a *personal, family, and congregational spiritual worship*, in which the believer, both in private and public, offered prayer and praise. The synagogue worship belonged to this class; and it resembled the worship of the Christian dispensation, which spiritual worship has continued, while the temple worship, with its ceremonies and offerings, have been done away by the coming of Christ; that is, by the fulfilment, or coming to pass of the events which those ceremonies represented or shadowed forth.

Jesus, where'er thy people meet,  
There they behold thy mercy-seat;  
Where'er they seek thee, thou art found,  
And every place is hallow'd ground.

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## CHAPTER IV.

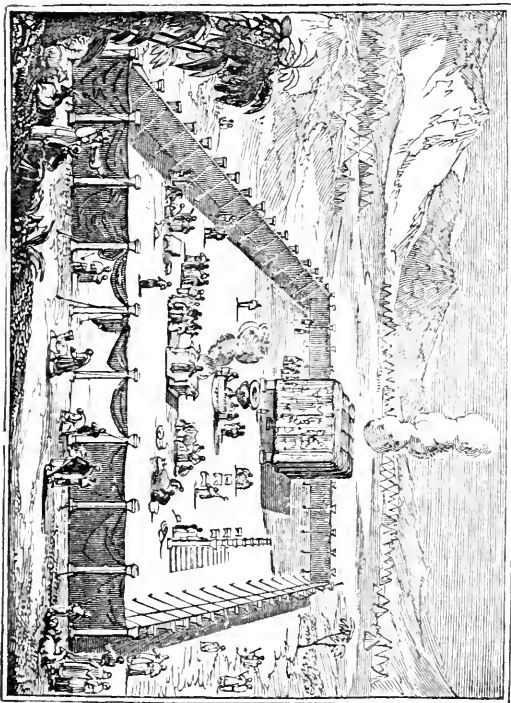
### THE TABERNACLE, AND THE ARTICLES THEREIN.

THE tabernacle was the only place where the public ritual of Jewish national worship was to be celebrated. The directions how it was to be constructed were given by the Lord to Moses, Exod. xxvi. This place is mentioned under different names in the Old Testament. It is called a tent, a habitation, a sanctuary, a house, the dwelling-place of Jehovah's glory, Jehovah's tent, and the tent of the congregation, and sometimes the palace, although these names are not always preserved distinctly in our English version. There was another tabernacle erected a short time before, see Exod. xxxiii. 7, called the tabernacle of the congregation, probably a large tent, where Moses transacted public business. Some have supposed that was the tent where Moses and his family dwelt, but more probably it was erected for public purposes; and as no particulars are given respecting this erection, it is unnecessary to waste time in conjectures about it.

The engraving shows the appearance of THE TABERNACLE, as it may properly be called, which it will be



THE TABERNACLE.

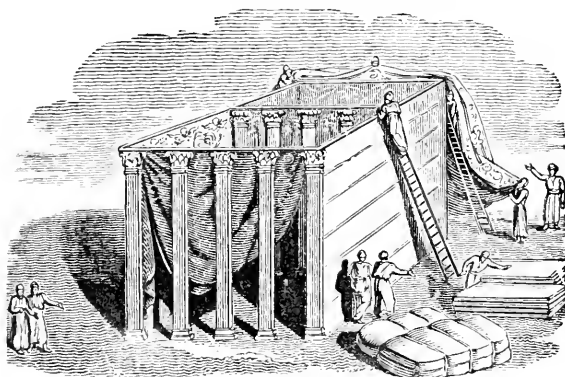


seen was a moveable place of worship, that could be taken to pieces, and carried from place to place. The reader will find an account of the tabernacle, and the articles it contained, in Exodus xx. to xxx. and xxxvi. to xl., from whence the following particulars are taken. It is best to make this general reference once for all, and to recommend the younger reader especially, to look in the Bible for the accounts of the various articles, as they may easily be found in those chapters.

The outer enclosure was the court of the tabernacle, about 150 feet long and 75 broad. This was surrounded on all sides with linen curtains, hanging from silver rods, which extended from one column to another. On the east and west sides were ten columns, and twenty on the north, and as many on the south. These columns were of shittim wood, a sort of acacia; some think it was cedar. Each post was fixed in a socket, or large piece of brass. Near the top of the columns silver hooks were fixed, on which the curtain rods rested. The entrance was on the east. A curtain, or piece of tapestry, richly wrought with blue, purple, and scarlet, hung on the four middle columns of that side, which was drawn up, and thus left three entrances adjoining each other.

The tabernacle or tent was placed about the middle of the western side of the court. It was an oblong square, about 54 feet long from west to east, and 18 from north to south. The walls or sides were formed of 48 wooden planks of shittim wood, each rather more than two feet and a half broad, and 18 feet long. Twenty of these boards formed the north side, as many were used for the south, and six on the west, an additional board being placed at each western corner. The planks were covered with plates of gold, their ends were fixed by mortices and tenons, in blocks of silver, weighing about one hundred pounds weight, two to each board; bars covered with gold extended along each side, to unite the whole firmly together. The eastern end was left for the entrance, and was closed by a curtain of worked linen cloth, hanging from silver rods, which rested upon five columns covered with gold. The roof, some think, was a frame of wood

resting upon the upright planks, and over these were four coverings of different materials made up in several curtains, joined together by loops and couplings. Others consider that the coverings formed the only roofing. The undermost was of fine twined linen; it hung down to about two



feet from the earth, and had figures of the cherubim wrought upon it with blue, purple, and scarlet. The next covering was of goats' hair, woven into a sort of cloth; the third was a covering of rams' skins dyed red; the fourth of what is called in our translation badgers' skins; but what animal is meant is not certain. The three outer coverings reached to the ground. The tabernacle was divided into two unequal parts; the first occupied about two-thirds of the length, or nearly 35 feet. This was called the Holy Place, or the First Tabernacle, Heb. ix. 2. The inner apartment was only half the length; it was separated from the outer by a wrought curtain or veil, and was called the Most Holy Place. The height of each apartment was the length of the planks, or 18 feet.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE FURNITURE AND UTENSILS OF THE TABERNACLE.

ABOUT the middle of the outer court was the altar for burnt-offerings. It was a sort of coffer or chest, made of shittim wood, nearly five feet and a half in height, and nine feet in length and breadth. It rested on four short feet of brass, which were hollow, and through which the blood of the victim flowed out. The sides were covered with brass, and the inner space, it is supposed, was filled with earth, on which the fire was kindled upon a grate of brass; see Exod. xxxviii. 1—7. The four corners of the altar projected upwards, so as to resemble horns, 1 Kings ii. 28; Psa. cxviii. 27. To these the victims were bound; and criminals, as in the cases of Joab and Adonijah, caught hold of them, (see engraving on page 34.) These horns, however, were not considered as protecting a heinous criminal. But, as Mather says, "He that flies to Christ, and hangs upon him, whose power was typified by these horns, shall never be plucked thence." At the four corners were rings, through which were put the poles used for carrying the altar. On the south side was an ascent to the altar, Lev. ix. 22, made of earth heaped up.

There were various articles for the use of the altar, as pots or urns to take away the ashes, shovels, basins, flesh-hooks and fire-pans: all these were made of brass; see Exod. xxxviii. 1—7. The fire upon this altar was miraculously kindled, and was kept perpetually burning, Lev. ix. 24; vi. 12, 13. This fire is considered to have been emblematical of the wrath of God against sin, Heb. xii. 29; Isa. xxxiii. 14. The Spirit of God also is compared to fire, Matt. iii. 11; Isa. iv. 4; and his influences are a sacred fire that never goes out. The Divine word and ordinances also are likened to fire, Jer. xxiii. 29; and we read of fiery trials and afflictions, 1 Pet. iv. 12.

Between the altar and the tabernacle was placed a laver, or large basin, with an ornamented stand or foot, in which the priests washed their hands and feet, when about

to perform their duties. It was made of brass, of the looking-glasses of the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle, Exod. xxxviii. 8. This description has puzzled many modern readers; but it means that the laver was formed of the brazen mirrors used by the women. At that time glass was not in use, and it would not be suitable for making such a large basin. And in ancient times the women had small plates, or flat pieces of metal, very highly polished, which showed the face nearly as well as our present looking-glasses. These they usually carried about with them. The Greek version adds, that the women here mentioned were fasting at the doors of the tabernacle on the day when it was first set up.

We may remark hence, that in all ages of the church there have been some persons constant in their attendance upon Divine ordinances, and willing to part even with lawful things for Christ's sake. Is not this true of very many females in our country at the present day, who are found actively employed in every good work, for the spread of the gospel, and for the temporal benefit of their fellow creatures?

The tabernacle had no windows, but there was a large candlestick or candelabra, represented in the view of the interior of the tabernacle, page 29, the main pillar of which was five feet high, according to Jewish writers. It had six branches; and at the end of each, and at the top of the main stem, was a lamp. All the seven lights were kept constantly burning in the night; but, according to Josephus, only three in the daytime; and, from Exod. xxx. 8, it appears that a part, if not the whole, were lighted in the evening. In the morning, a priest put the lamps in order, with the gold snuffers made for that purpose, and removed the snuff and dregs in a golden vessel. He then filled the lamps with the purest olive oil, such as ran easily from the fruit when bruised, without being pressed. The candlestick, with the articles belonging to it, weighed a talent, or 125 pounds, and was made of pure gold, very beautifully wrought with buds and flowers, and various ornaments.

In the holy place, also was a table of shittim wood,

about three feet and a half in length, 20 inches broad, and 30 in height, covered with plates of gold, and ornamented with a border of wrought gold. There was an ornamented cornice or border round about, to keep the frame-work steady ; also golden rings for the staves to



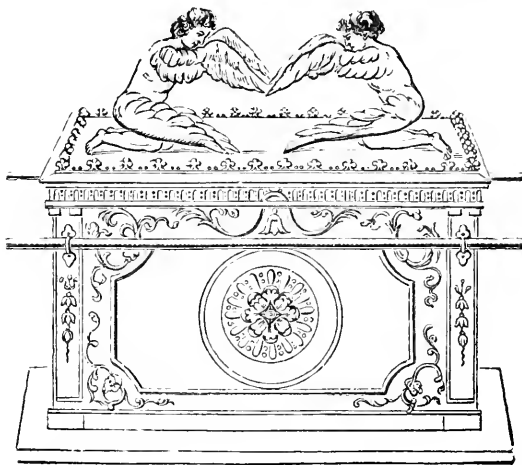
carry it. Upon this table were placed twelve unleavened loaves, each containing about ten pints of fine flour, which were changed for fresh loaves every week. These loaves, called the shewbread, were arranged in two piles,

sprinkled with frankincense and salt. The name given in the original, literally means "bread of the face," because it was placed before the face or presence of Jehovah. Also, it is called, the bread arranged in order, and the perpetual bread; see Lev. xxiv. 6, 7; 1 Chron. xxiii. 29. Wine was placed upon the table in bowls or cups, called vials; and there were dishes, and spoons, and covers, all of gold.

A small altar for incense was placed near the veil which divided the apartments. This was made of shittim wood, 21 inches in length and breadth, and three feet and a half in height. It was ornamented and plated with gold; hence it was called the golden altar, to distinguish it from the brazen altar in the outer court. It had an ornamented border, and rings for the staves by which it was carried. On this altar incense was burned every morning and evening. The incense was a compound of drugs, mentioned Exod. xxx. 34—38, and when burned, made a sweet perfume. No other perfume might be used in the sanctuary, nor was this composition to be used for any common purposes. The incense was typical of Christ's intercession, and of prayer: thus the golden altar was a type of Christ in regard to his intercession, see Rev. viii. 3; as the altar of burnt-offering was a type of Christ in regard to the other part of his priestly office, his oblation or satisfaction.

The inner apartment, called the Holy of Holies, did not contain many articles. There was deposited the ark of the covenant, a chest of shittim wood, rather more than 30 inches in breadth, the same in depth, and three feet and a half in length. It was covered with the purest gold, with an ornamented border on the top; on each side were two gold rings for the staves by which it was carried, and which remained in them. The ends of these staves were drawn out so far as to touch the veil which separated the apartments. The lid of the ark was of pure gold, ornamented with two figures of cherubim, so placed that their faces turned towards each other, and leaned downward towards the ark. Their form cannot now be ascertained, but it is supposed to have been something like the representation on the next page. The wings

were spread to form a sort of seat, hence the lid was called the mercy-seat, and might be considered as a throne, on which the Shekinah, or Divine presence, rested, while the



ark itself formed, as it were, the footstool. There was nothing in the ark but the tables of stone on which the ten commandments were graven. By the ark stood a vase of gold, which contained some manna, also the rod of Aaron which budded, (see it on page 39,) and a copy of the books of Moses containing the law. Or, the manna and the rod may have been in the ark when placed by Moses in the tabernacle; but these articles do not appear to have been therein when it was placed in the temple. Perhaps they had been taken away while the ark was in the hands of the Philistines, or at some other period during the times of confusion and disorder recorded in the books of Judges and 1 Samuel. Either of these views explains the apparent difference between Heb. ix. 4, and 2 Chron. v. 10.



Thus the tabernacle gave the idea of a noble residence, and the various articles in it may be considered as the requisite articles of furniture; and the whole was intended to convey to the nation the idea of their Ruler residing continually among them. But these were only the examples and shadows of heavenly things, and the sight of them profited not, unless the beholder looked beyond them, considering what they signified. They are expressly spoken of as being "the patterns of things in the heavens," Heb. ix. 23: each article has been considered as having reference to some spiritual object; but many fanciful applications have been made, and the minute discussion of the subject of scriptural types requires much sobriety of judgment.

The materials for this tabernacle and its contents were provided by the people, who offered according to their respective abilities, and worked for it in various ways. So ready were they on this occasion, that Moses found it necessary to give public notice that enough was provided, and that no more articles should be brought, Exod. xxxvi. 6. The extent of these offerings will appear, when it is stated, that learned men compute that the value of the metals alone, the weight of which is recorded Exod. xxxviii. 24—29, would amount to more than £240,000 of our money. The articles given by the Egyptians to the Israelites when leaving their land, and those taken from the Amalekites, probably supplied a large portion of these offerings. The readiness of the Israelites shows, that when God the Holy Spirit puts his grace into the heart, the hands will be diligently employed in the Divine service. The chief directors of the work were Bezaleel of the tribe of Judah, and Aholiab of the tribe of Dan. It is expressly said, that they were Divinely instructed for this purpose, being "filled with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; and to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in the cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of wood, to make any manner of cunning (or skilful) work—to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the

cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work," Exod. xxxv. 31—35. Thus, when God requires any particular services to be done, he will find out or make persons fit and able to perform them. And the women, who spun the goats' hair for this work, are said to be wise-hearted, as well as the most skilful jewellers and goldsmiths who executed the most difficult articles. Surely this is encouragement for all to unite in the work of God, believing that a man is accepted therein according to the ability he may possess.

A particular account of the setting up and consecrating the tabernacle is given in Exod. xl. There we read, ver. 34, that the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. This was the Shekinah, or manifestation of the Divine presence, so called from a Hebrew word, which signifies to inhabit or dwell. God had directed, that the tabernacle or sanctuary should be made, that he might dwell among the people, Exod. xxv. 8. From various passages in Scripture, the Shekinah appears to have been as Josephus describes it, the visible form of a flame, most likely very shining and glorious. Whether or not it was constantly visible in the tabernacle and temple we have no distinct account; but its entrance into the temple is expressly stated 1 Kings viii. 10, 11, and its departure seems to be spoken of in Ezek. x. 18, and xi. 23. The Jewish writers relate, that it never appeared in the second temple. Its absence from that temple, where the Son of God himself appeared in human flesh, is a proof that the Shekinah was a figurative or prophetic representation that the promised Messiah should appear in due time. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt" (tabernacled or shekinised) "among us," John i. 14.

In Numbers iv. it is related how the different parts of the tabernacle, and the articles belonging to it, were carried, during the removals of the Israelites in the wilderness. The priests, Aaron and his family, covered all the articles before the Levites were allowed to come into the tabernacle to prepare for the removal. The coverings



AARON'S ROD. NUMBERS VII. 8.

showed the reverence due to the holy things, and also that mysterious meanings were intended by them. That dispensation was obscure and dark compared with the light of the gospel.

When the Israelites entered the land of Canaan, the tabernacle was set up at Gilgal, where they first encamped. It remained there about seven years, and then was removed to Shiloh, a more central situation, a few miles north of Jerusalem. Here other tents and buildings were placed round the tabernacle, to lodge the priests, and to receive various articles connected with the services. Thus Eli's sons sent to the kitchen where the peace-offerings were boiled, 1 Sam. ii. 14, and this explains how Samuel and Eli laid down near the tabernacle; also David's going into the house of God, or that part of it where the priests lived, and there obtaining the shew-bread which had been taken from the holy place.

Some time after the death of Eli, the tabernacle appears to have been fixed at Nob, and from thence was carried to Gibeon; and it is to be remarked, that as Saul slew the priests of the Lord before the tabernacle at Nob, and ruined that place, so his sons were hanged up at Gibeon, whither the tabernacle had been removed, 1 Sam. xxii. 18, 19; 2 Sam. xxi. 9. There is no account of these removals, nor of what became of the tabernacle after the temple was built. The ark does not appear to have been replaced in it when restored by the Philistines. From 2 Sam. vi. 17, we learn, that another building was reared by David, to receive the ark when it was carried to Jerusalem.

The following summary, from Brown, presents the typical meaning of the parts of the tabernacle and its furniture:—  
“The tabernacle and its furniture probably excited spiritual reflections in the minds of pious Israelites; for the apostle tells us, that they were ‘a shadow of good things to come.’ The curtains around the court might teach them a holy reverence for Divine things. The altar of burnt-offering pointed to the perfection of the Messiah's sacrifice; and the laver taught them the necessity of regeneration, and of daily application to that Fountain, which was opened

in the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. The tabernacle in general, where Jehovah condescended to reside, was a type of the body of the Messiah, in which, as in a tent, he tabernacled while on earth. The silver sockets, which formed the foundation, might remind them of those important doctrines on which all evangelical religion is founded; and by being made of the half shekels which were required of every male in Israel, they were calculated to show the personal interest that *each* should take in religion and its worship. The outer covering of goats' hair might point out the unattractive appearance of religion to the men of the world; the beautiful under-covering might indicate its glory as seen by the saints; the covering of rams' skins dyed red, might remind them of the efficacy of Messiah's blood, as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; while the covering of badgers' skins which (the Jewish traditions say) was blue, might point to the heavens, that true tabernacle which God had pitched, and not man. Nor was spiritual instruction less to be derived from entering the sacred tent. For, in the holy place, the table of shew-bread was a constant acknowledgment of God, as the giver of every temporal blessing; the candlestick, with the lamps, pointed to the seven-fold Spirit of God, whence all spiritual illumination proceeded; and the altar of incense taught them the efficacy of prayer, when offered up from a pure heart, and perfumed with the incense of the Messiah's merits. Nor were the instructions which were to be derived from the most holy place, less important. For the veil which separated the two apartments, not only indicated the partition-wall which divided the Jews from the rest of the world, and was taken away by the death of Christ, but also that veil which still conceals from mortal view the place of God's peculiar residence. The tables of the law were an instance of God's condescension to his chosen people; the rod that budded was emblematical of the unrivalled honour and unfading glory of a greater than Aaron; and the pot of manna, deposited in the ark, typified the hidden manna of which all the saints are partakers, while travelling through the

wilderness of this world. Nor could they overlook the mercy-seat, as pointing out the Divine goodness to offending sinners; and the cherubim of glory, which, by looking down to that propitiatory, represented the delight of the Trinity in this their work of mercy and love."

"The types of old," says Lee, "were the shells; the typified matter, the sweet kernel within. So that as the fashion of the kernel is within, such is the external form of the shell without; and accordingly we find it to have been so in the types." Observe, then, in reference to the tabernacle, that it was a type or figure of heaven itself; see Heb. ix. 24. Also of the person of the Messiah, and his dwelling among mankind in the flesh. He spoke of his body as a temple, John xi. 19, and many points of analogy or representation may be traced out. And further, the tabernacle prefigured the church, that holy society and mystical body of Jesus Christ, which in Scripture is called the house and temple of the living God, in which he dwells and walks; and the tabernacle was divided into several partitions. The outward court might denote the visible church; the holy place be an emblem of the church invisible; and the holiest of all represent the church triumphant in glory.



## CHAPTER VI.

## THE TEMPLE—ITS COURTS.

**THERE** is an account of the origin of the temple in 2 Sam. vii. and 1 Chron. xvii. When David was seated on the throne of Israel, and enjoyed rest from his enemies, as well as the splendour of royalty, he was not unmindful of the Lord his God; who, by the direct interference of his providence, had so often saved him from impending destruction, and had placed him in his exalted station. He had brought the ark, which was the symbol of Jehovah's presence, into the chief city of the land, and had placed it there in a building expressly erected for the purpose; but this was a tabernacle or tent, and he reflected that he himself dwelled in a house of cedar, a splendid building, while the ark of God dwelled within curtains. David, therefore, purposed to build a magnificent house in which the ark might be placed; but the Lord, by the prophet Nathan, forbade his proceeding with this design, and directed that one of his sons, not then born, should build this house. In 1 Chron. xxviii. 3, David expressly declares, (see also 2 Sam. vii. 9,) that he was not allowed to build this house, because he had been a man of war and had shed blood: thus strongly did the Lord testify his disapproval of warfare and bloodshed. This declaration is the more important, as during all David's life of warfare, he had acted either in self-defence, or in obedience to the Divine command, and for accomplishing the Lord's purposes concerning his people. Thus he was free from the guilt contracted by the conquerors and warriors, of whom we read in general history; but still he was not permitted to have his name recorded as the builder of that glorious temple, which work was to be accomplished by one who was "a man of peace," and as such, a remarkable personal type of the Messiah.

David, however, was permitted to form plans for the temple, and to collect a vast quantity of materials for building it. All the particulars are related in the Bible,

in the second book of Samuel, the first book of Kings, and the books of Chronicles: from 1 Chron. xxvi. 28, it is clear, that articles had been dedicated for this, or a similar purpose, by Samuel, and even by Saul, also by Abner and Joab. The present work may be useful in noticing how the Scripture accounts are connected, and perhaps in explaining some passages, though to give a narrative, which might be put instead of the Scripture account, would be wrong, and merely to print several chapters of the Bible here is unnecessary. But if the reader, whether old or young, has not lately read that part of the Bible with attention, let him put aside this book till he has read 2 Sam. vii. 1 Chron. xvii. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1 Chron. xxi. to 2 Chron. vi. and 1 Kings i. to viii. Two accounts are there given, each of which contains particulars that assist in explaining the other, and when these chapters are read attentively, the reader will have a better idea of the whole proceeding than any written by an uninspired pen could give. Townsend, in his "Arrangement of the Old Testament," gives the whole account, as a connected narrative, in the words of Scripture.

The letter of Solomon to Hiram king of Tyre, 2 Chron. ii. 3—10, contains a summary of his reasons for building the temple—that it was intended to facilitate the offering of the prescribed sacrifices, and to perpetuate the due performance of the Mosaic ritual. He expressly rejected the thought that such a place could be a residence for Him, whom the heaven, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain. We may also refer to the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the temple, as containing the most exalted ideas of the Supreme Being, and as carefully doing away any supposition which might prevail of Jehovah's dwelling in a house made with hands, however glorious, although he vouchsafed tokens of his immediate presence there in the midst of his people. He was equally ready to hear, "from heaven his dwelling place," the supplications presented to him, whether from that house or from a land of captivity.

The temple stood upon Mount Moriah, a hard limestone rock, nearly surrounded by precipices, on the





MOUNT MORIAH.

eastern side of Jerusalem. The summit was levelled to make a space sufficient to erect it, and as the extent even then was not large enough for the building and its courts, a terrace was raised from the valley beneath; by constructing a wall, in some places several hundred feet high. Thus the temple and its courts were placed on the brow of a terrific precipice. The engraving on page 45 gives some idea of the vast elevation at which the temple would be seen by those in the valley beneath; and it represents the present appearance of Mount Moriah, with the Turkish mosque, which now occupies the site of the temple. But much of the valley has been filled up during the two thousand five hundred years which have elapsed since the building was first erected.

The attentive reader of Scripture cannot view even the picture of this remarkable site, without having his mind drawn to considerations similar to those suggested by Lightfoot. "This bank was once well stored with bushes and brambles, Gen. xxii. 13, and afterwards with worse briars and thorns, the Jebusites, who had it in possession till David purchased it for Divine use, and built the structure we have described. Here was then a poor threshing-floor of Ornan, the Jebusite, but afterwards the habitation of the God of Jacob; a place and fabric as sumptuous and eminent as it was possible for man, and art, and cost to make it; the glory of the nation where it was, and the wonder of all the nations round about it; but at last as great a wonder and monument of desolation and ruin, as ever it had been of beauty and glory."

The particulars given in the Bible, and those related by Jewish writers, show that the plan of the temple was similar to that of the tabernacle, but it was considerably larger. There were also similar utensils and articles for the sacred services, but they were, in some instances, larger or more numerous. This superb edifice, as constructed by Solomon, consisted of the Holy Place, and a Holy of Holies, as in the tabernacle; the main building being about 110 feet long, 36 wide, and 54 high. This pile was surrounded on each side, except the entrance, by three stories of small rooms, about eight feet square, which reached to about

half the height of the body of the temple. The east end, or front, was a magnificent portico, which rose to the height of 220 feet. Thus the form of the whole pile would not be unlike that of some ancient churches, which have a lofty tower in front, and a low aisle extending along each side of the main building. The principal structure was surrounded by several courts and a variety of other buildings, some of which are mentioned in the books of Kings and Chronicles.

The daily services in Solomon's temple are briefly stated by Abijah, in his remonstancce to Jeroboam and the Israelites, 2 Chron. xiii. 10, 11: "The priests, which minister unto the Lord, are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business: and they burn unto the Lord every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense: the shew-bread also set they in order upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening." From this passage we see that the daily services of Solomon's temple were the same as those of the tabernacle; and we shall see, from the Jewish writers, that the same services were continued after the captivity.

This beautiful temple, the richest and most highly-finished edifice the world ever saw, though not the largest, continued in its original splendour only about thirty years. Shishak, king of Egypt, then took Jerusalem, and plundered the temple. Many other circumstances connected with its history are recorded in the books of Kings and Chronicles, and it was burned by the Chaldeans, when it had stood about 430 years. See 2 Kings xxv. 13—15; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17—20.

After the captivity, one of the first cares of the Jews who returned to their beloved country, was to rebuild the temple. Various hinderances and delays retarded the progress. It was begun by Zernbbabel, but their means were so scanty, that the aged men who had seen the first house, wept with a loud voice when they saw the new foundations laid, Ezra iii. 12. Yet the people in general praised the Lord with shouts of joy. To those who had not enjoyed the Divine ordinances in their greater glory,

the renewal of these services was felt as an especial blessing. Let us learn hence, that the day of small things is not to be despised, and let us especially be thankful for the great mercies we now enjoy as to the worship of God.

This second temple stood for about five hundred years, when, being much decayed, Herod the Great undertook to rebuild it. He employed 18,000 workmen, for more than nine years, in the work. But, although in that time the main building was completed, other works were undertaken. The courts were further enlarged, and additional buildings erected, so that, in our Saviour's time, the Jews could say, that 46 years had passed during its construction. It is calculated that the courts were sufficiently spacious to contain more than half a million of persons at the same time. No expense was spared to render this temple equal, if not superior, in size, as well as in beauty and splendour, to any thing ever seen among mankind. Of this pile, including several courts and many hundred additional apartments, we have no particular account in Scripture; but it has been described by Josephus and other Jewish writers, and a cursory view of it may now be given. The English reader will find many additional particulars in the works of Lightfoot, Calmet, and others, from whose pages the present account is chiefly taken. A map, or ground plan, is prefixed to this volume which will enable the reader to form a general idea of the temple; but it would have been useless to attempt to insert the smaller apartments which surrounded the structure.

The principal entrance to the court of the Gentiles, the extent and situation of which will be seen on reference to the plan of Jerusalem, was by the east gate, called the gate Shushan and the king's gate. The first name is said to have been derived from a representation of the city of Shushan, in Persia, portrayed upon it, to remind the Jews of their captivity, that they might beware of again falling into idolatry; and also to remind them of the feast of Purim, established in that city, to commemorate their deliverance from the plot of Haman. The name of the king's gate was to remind them of Solomon, who raised the foundation from the valley beneath; and the piazza

on that side the court was wider than the rest, and called Solomon's porch. There our Lord walked at the feast of dedication, John x. 23, when the Jews were about to



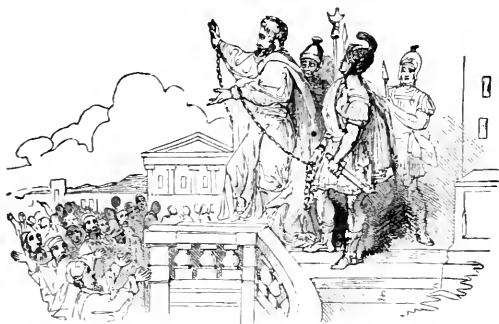
cast stones at him ; and there Peter addressed the people after the miraculous healing of the lame man, Acts iii. 11. Josephus says, that no one could look down from the flat roof of this cloister without being dizzy, on account of the vast depth of the valley beneath. At the south-east corner is supposed to have been the pinnacle from whence Satan tempted our Saviour to cast himself down.

After passing the buildings immediately about the entrance gate, pens or folds would be seen, containing cattle, sheep, and lambs. At this gate the half shekel, as directed Exod. xxx. 13, was collected during three weeks before the passover, and there sat the money changers, ready to supply Jewish coins for the temple dues, and the purchase of sacrifices, to persons who came from a distance, in exchange for foreign money ; thus not only levying a tax on the necessities of the devout visitor of the temple, but making God's house a place of merchandise. It is probable that the officers of the temple let these standings for considerable sums, to compensate for which the sellers made an unjust and fraudulent gain, therefore our Lord called the place "a den of thieves." There were also some small shops or apartments for the regular sale of

wine, oil, meal, and other things, which were used with the sacrifices. Our Lord's solemn rebuke of this conduct is well known. It was so manifestly evil, that the guilty crowds fled before a single despised individual of humble parentage. But do not we act in like manner, if we *carry* our thoughts of business or of pleasure into the house of God dedicated for Christian worship? May we not apprehend, that the sacred places of our land, in one year witness more mental arrangements for bargains in trade, or for parties of worldly pleasure, than ever disgraced the temple at Jerusalem? Let us not forget that our God knoweth the thoughts and searcheth the heart.

In this court, often called by the Jews "the mountain of the house," persons from all nations were seen; and many devout Gentiles no doubt entered this space, desiring there to offer supplications to the God of Israel, as none but a Jew might approach nearer to the inner courts and the holy places. But how must the feelings of the pious strangers have been outraged, on finding the inclosure intended expressly for their use, turned into a cattle-market and an exchange! When we see such places in all the tumult of busy traffic, let us bless God that these scenes are not permitted to interrupt our worship, but that other places are set apart for prayer and praise. Yet, singular to relate, there was a time when the interior of St. Paul's, the largest place for worship in London, presented much such a scene. During part of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the main building was crowded by persons who resorted to it for buying, and selling, and hiring, and for making known their wants, and even for disgraceful and wicked purposes. It is true, that God dwells not within stone walls, and that there can be no holiness in bricks and mortar; but if the world and its devices are allowed to gain a settlement within the house dedicated to Divine worship, it will be even more difficult than it is at present, to prevent the intrusion of worldly thoughts during the hours set apart for sacred services. The piazza, or covered walk which surrounded the court, had a roof supported by large pillars of beautiful white marble. The whole is

computed to have included a large level space, equal to four acres and a half, paved with variegated marble. In the north-west corner of this court was an ascent to the tower of Antonia by the stairs into that castle, from whence St. Paul addressed the people.



From the court of the Gentiles the Jews entered by several openings, each with twelve steps, into the Hil, or sacred fence. This was a space 18 feet wide, and nine feet above the court which surrounded it. A wall of lattice work, five feet high, formed the outward boundary; and at each entrance were posts with inscriptions in different languages, forbidding strangers to enter. The outcry against Paul was first excited by a false accusation, that he had taken a Greek beyond this boundary, Acts xxi. 27—29. This fence is evidently alluded to by the same apostle, Eph. ii. 13, 14, when he speaks of Christ as “our peace,” who united both Jews and Gentiles into one church, having broken down “the middle wall of partition” between them.

From the Hil, the Jew passed, by an ascent of five steps, into the court of the women; so called because this was their appointed place of worship, beyond which they might not pass unless they had burnt-offerings or trespass-offerings to present. It is mentioned by different names in

Scripture, as the new court, 2 Chron. xx. 5; the outer court, Ezek. xlvi. 21; the treasury, John viii. 20. The eastern gate to this court was the beautiful gate mentioned, Acts iii. 2. It was so named from being overlaid with plates of Corinthian brass, a valuable mixture of gold, silver, and copper. This court contained a space of about an acre and a half; it was wholly surrounded by buildings, and a piazza with ranges of galleries. It was paved with marble, and had three gates beside that already described. In each corner was a smaller court, where the priests boiled the sacrifices, with buildings for different purposes. In one corner the Nazarites cut off their hair. In another, the wood intended for the altar was carefully examined, to separate any pieces that had worms: these were deemed unfit for the altar, and used for inferior purposes. Another was for the reception of cleansed lepers; and in the fourth were stores of wine and oil. These piles of buildings, and the galleries between them, were 45 feet in height. In this court also were the chests for receiving the offerings, into one of which our blessed Lord saw the poor widow cast her two mites. These chests were thirteen in number, each for a different purpose. Into this court the lame man, when healed, followed Peter and John; and here stood the proud Pharisee, near the gate leading to the inner court, when he thanked God that he was not as other men; while the poor publican stood in a remote part, offering a petition which every true believer feels should be his daily prayer. This court was the usual place of worship for those who did not bring sacrifices to offer on the altar. It is probable that many offerings, and also the spoils taken by Herod from the nations he conquered, were suspended on the walls; and here Agrippa hung up the golden chain given him by the Roman emperor Caligula, as a memorial of the iron chain with which he had been bound by Tiberius. The offerings were visible from a distance, and appear to have been "the gifts" pointed out to our Lord, as he sat with his disciples on the Mount of Olives, Luke xxi. 5.

The court of Israel was next. The ascent to this was by fifteen steps, the pavement being about 13 feet higher than



the court of the women. The gate tower was 90 feet high, and richly adorned. Here lepers stood while the atonement for them was offered, and their purification completed. Here the trial of bitter waters was made. And this was the gate described by Josephus, as so heavy that it could hardly be shut by twenty men, yet opening of its own accord one night, some years before the destruction of Jerusalem, though barred and bolted; an omen regarded as importing the approaching ruin of the state.

On reference to the plan, it will be seen that the court of Israel surrounded the main buildings of the temple, as a frame encompasses a picture. It was only about 14 feet wide, and was no more than a piazza, under which the Israelites stood while their sacrifices were burning on the altar; probably something like the piazza round the old Royal Exchange in London, but the centre part was higher than the piazza, for the pavement of the court of Israel was about four feet below the level of that of the court of the priests, from which it was also separated by an open railing. On the outer side it was separated from the Hil by a wall and buildings, probably some above the piazza and others on the outside, but the precise arrangement cannot be ascertained, although the names and uses of many of the apartments are stated, and their probable situation is pointed out upon the plan. They were chiefly used for the accommodation of the priests and Levites, for baths and purifications, and for various other purposes connected with the offerings. The eastern side appears to have been rather wider than the others, and was partly appropriated to the Levites, who played on musical instruments and sang during the services. The whole area of this court was less than half an acre.

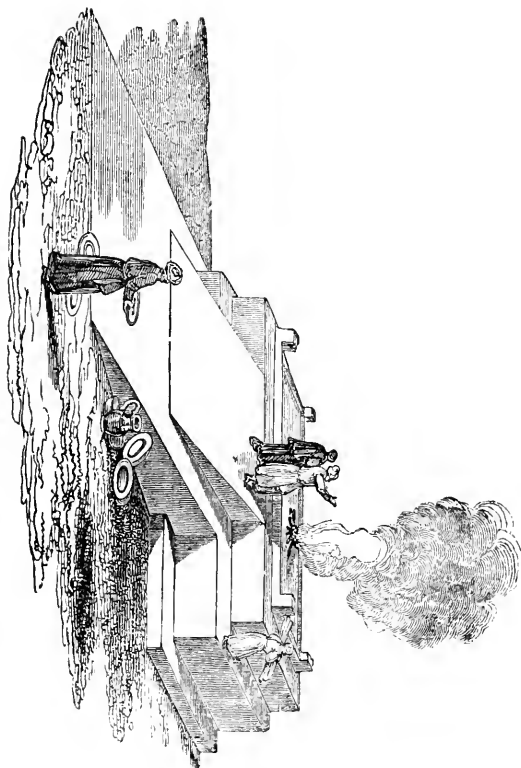
The court of the priests was the inner division of the temple, and contained about an acre and a quarter, which was nearly filled by the building of the temple itself and the brazen altar. It was only entered by the Israelites in general when they offered sacrifices; and the rule was, that they came in at the north or south sides, and returned by a different gate from that by which they entered. The brazen altar stood exactly on the site of the threshing-floor

of Araunah. It was much larger than the altar in the tabernacle. The altar of Solomon was 37 feet square; that erected after the captivity about six feet larger; that of Herod was 62 feet square at the base, and 44 at the top, and 18 feet high. A cubit on the south-east corner was cut off, as the boundary line between the tribes of Judah and Benjamin ran there; and from a fanciful application of Gen. xlix. 27, it was thought that no part of the altar should be in the former tribe. At about two feet above the ground the altar was narrowed two feet on each side, and about nine feet higher it was again narrowed two feet; on these two ledges the priests could walk round the altar, as they did on the upper of these ledges when they sprinkled the blood of the sacrifices. A red line round the altar, at half the height, directed the priests in sprinkling, which was done in some cases above, and in others below the line. If any blood remained when they had completed the circuit, it was poured out at the south-west corner, through two holes leading to a conduit or pipe, by which the blood was conveyed to the brook Kidron. Higher up was another ledge, but interrupted by the columns called the horns of the altar. The representation on page 55 will convey some idea of the altar.

In the temple rebuilt by Herod the altar was formed of a large mass of stones, from the valley of Bit-kerim, or Beth-hacurim, a place about eight miles from Jerusalem. They were not shaped; no iron tool had been used upon them, Exod. xx. 25; but they were cemented together with mortar, pitch, and lead, into a regular form. On account of the number of sacrifices, the altar was washed on the eve of the sabbath, and whitened at the passover and feast of tabernacles. On the top of this altar three fires were kept constantly burning. The first was the great fire for the sacrifices; the second, a small fire of fig-tree wood, to supply the coals taken into the holy place to burn the incense; the third, another small fire, to rekindle the larger fire in case it should go out. The priests went up by an inclined plane, or sloping ascent of stone, united to the altar.

This altar of burnt-offering was sometimes called **Ariel**,

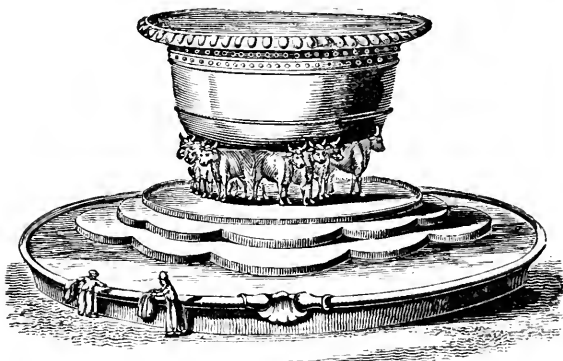
THE LARGE ALTAR FOR SACRIFICES



or the lion of God, from the number of animals it devoured; the number consumed on it as sacrifices. Whatever touched it was esteemed holy, and there was no other altar allowed in the land of Israel, thus the unity of God was symbolically taught. The height of the altar itself, added to the higher ground on which the inner court stood, would render the flames that consumed the sacrifice partially visible to those in the outer courts, and remind them of the great object of these institutions.

On the north side of the altar were twenty-four rings, fixed in the stones of the pavement, to which the animals intended for sacrifices were fastened when slaughtered. Also four pillars on which the carcasses were suspended to be flayed, and eight marble tables on which they were washed and divided.

In the first temple, the molten sea, or brass laver, stood in this court; an immense vessel of metal, nine feet deep, and more than 50 in circumference. Its precise shape is not known, but it contained from 12,000 to 20,000 gallons



of water, and some authors represent it as in this engraving; but the shape of the vessel itself is uncertain, and it is not likely that the oxen were fully represented as

here, the supports probably were only oval masses of metal, having the form and something of the appearance of the head of an ox.

On the south side of the altar, under the ascent, was a dark recess, where the offal and ashes were put till removed from the court, and a closet for birds that were found unfit for sacrifices. On the side of the ascent was a table of silver, for vessels and utensils; and one of marble, on which were placed the pieces of the sacrifices, before they were carried up to the altar. Below the ascent on the south side, the less holy sacrifices were killed, when the whole were too numerous to be slaughtered on the north side.

Between the altar and the porch was a space about forty feet in width, considered particularly sacred. None might enter it who were maimed or deformed, nor any persons with their heads uncovered; for, contrary to European customs, that was a sign of irreverence; nor durst any enter it with unwashed hands and feet, or if excited by wine. No one might remain in this space while the high priest was burning the daily incense in the holy place; nor when he went into the most holy place, once a year, with the blood of the sin-offering. This may remind us, that no one is able to take part with Christ in his intercession for his church, in that intercession which was figured by the offering of incense, and sprinkling blood on the mercy-seat. And thus there is an emblem, that human merit cannot, in any degree, be the ground of our justification. In this space the priests, the ministers of the Lord, wept and prayed on the days appointed for public fasting and national humiliation, Joel ii. 17. As this space was so sacred, how daring the blasphemous conduct of the idolaters, whom Ezekiel saw between the porch and the altar, worshipping the sun, with their faces towards the east, and their backs to the temple! Here also Zacharias, the son of Barachias, was murdered, Matt. xxiii. 35, the atrocity of the crime being increased by the place where it was committed.

In this space was the megeruphita, apparently a large vessel of sonorous metal, which was struck at certain

times to give signals for the performance of various duties. Also the laver, in which the priests washed before they entered on their duties. In the last temple there was only one laver; its size, and the material of which it was made, are not mentioned, but it was filled afresh every day. On one side of this court was a room which contained a draw-well; or rather a wheel, by which water was drawn up from a very large cistern, or reservoir. The quantity of water used in the temple was very great, both for the personal use of the priests, and for cleansing the courts, which, after many sacrifices, needed a considerable quantity to wash the pavement. Aristeeas describes this supply as being brought more than half a mile, in pipes, underground. Being raised by this well, the water was easily supplied to the baths, and other places where it was needed. There were many vents, or holes in the pavement, through which the waste water and washings were conveyed, by underground channels to the brook Kidron.



## CHAPTER VII.

THE TEMPLE—THE HOLY PLACES—PRESENT STATE  
OF THE SITE.

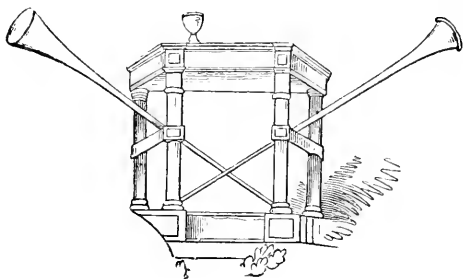
THE pile of building containing the temple itself, as reconstructed by Herod, was much larger, and in some respects differed in form from that of Solomon, already described. The east front, or porch, was 180 feet long, and 218 high in the centre; but lower on each side, and contained many apartments. It had a flat roof, surrounded with battlements. The body of the temple, behind this, was narrower, so that the whole was in the form of the letter **T**. This porch was entered by twelve steps, each nearly 11 inches high, and of different widths, but extending almost to the altar. Thus the whole elevation of the threshold of the porch, above the court of the Gentiles, was more than 40 feet. The porch was about 39 feet across, from the threshold of the holy place, including the thickness of the walls. The entrance to the porch was a large opening, more than 70 feet high, and half as wide. It had no doors, but stood always open. Josephus relates this, and says it was intended to be emblematical of heaven, always open to the prayer of the believer. In the porch of Solomon's temple stood the two pillars, called Jachin and Boaz. And in that of Herod's temple was a golden vine, richly wrought, the bunches of grapes as large as a man; it was continually increased in size, some persons giving a leaf or a grape, others more.

The entrance to the holy place was through a wall 11 feet thick. A door of two leaves was hung next to the porch, and another next to the holy place, each opened inwards. The priest, whose business it was to open and shut these doors, first passed through a wicket in the outer door, then entered the holy place through a small opening in the wall, exactly where one of the leaves of the inner door fell back against the wall when opened. He then unclosed the large leaves of the doors. Those of the

outer door being richly adorned, formed ornamental sides to the entrance. In this entrance was a marble slab, which could be lifted by a ring fastened in it. From a cavity underneath this, the priest took the dust used in the trial by the bitter water, Numb. v. 17. We may here observe, that the proceedings of that trial, as originally directed, were simple, solemn, and considerate towards both parties; but, in later times, many circumstances of unkindness towards the woman were added to the ceremonial, rather showing a determination to prejudge the case against the accused, than leaving the result to the Most High.

When the doors of the holy place were opened, the entrance was closed by a veil richly wrought. Veils were also hung in the gates of the court of Israel, and in the gateway of the porch.

The holy place, at the time our Saviour was upon earth, was not only larger, but more lofty than that of Solomon; the flooring and the sides were covered with gold, and richly wrought with carved work, probably flowers, palm trees, and cherubim. In each temple there was a range of windows near the roof, above the chambers at the sides of the building. A candlestick for the



lamps, a table for the shew-bread, and a golden altar for incense, stood in the holy place of each temple, as in that



of the tabernacle. When Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus, a priest, named Joshua or Jesus, preserved the two first articles, and delivered them to the conqueror, who had them carried in his triumphal procession, and deposited them in the Temple of Peace, at Rome. The table and the candlestick are represented among the sculptures with which the triumphal arch of Titus, in that city, is adorned; a copy is given in the engraving, which also represents the silver trumpets. Very frequent use was made of the trumpets in the temple services. In Numb. x. 10, "And in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God:" and, in the books of Chronicles, we find they were introduced into the temple services. In later times the rule was, that not more than one hundred and twenty, nor less than two trumpets, were to be blown on any occasion of sacrifice.

In the temple of Solomon, the Holy of Holies, or Most Holy Place, was separated from the outer apartment by folding doors of olive wood, gilded, and richly ornamented. In the second temple there were no doors, but two veils instead, exceedingly thick and strong, being of blue, purple, scarlet, and white twined linen yarn; some say of woollen yarn; each thread sixfold, and woven upon hair warp, seventy-two hairs to each thread. Though two veils in number, they are spoken of as one, both in Scripture and by Josephus, as they formed one partition. These veils were rent asunder, from the top to the bottom, at our Saviour's death, which signified that the mysteries of the Jewish dispensation were then to be revealed and to pass away; and that the way of access to God was opened, Christ having entered for us into the holy place not made with hands: see Heb. ix. 7; x. 19. Having overcome the sharpness of death, he opened the kingdom of heaven to believers; and there is nothing now to hinder, but every thing to encourage, our direct access to our God upon his mercy-seat.

It is thought, that the most holy place in the temple, was about four times the size of that in the tabernacle; the

length, breadth, and height, each being doubled. In Solomon's temple, the floor and ceiling were of cedar, overlaid with gold; the walls of cedar, carved with palm trees, cherubim, and flowers covered with gold; and doubtless they were very magnificent in the temples of Zerubbabel and Herod. Here was no window. The glory of the Lord had been its light when the Shekinah appeared; at other times it was involved in darkness. In Solomon's temple, the ark of the covenant was placed here; but when he deposited it, the golden pot with manna, and Aaron's rod, appear to have been lost, (see page 36;) or perhaps they were placed near, but not within it; for it only contained the tables of stone, 2 Chron. v. 10. The copy of the law, see Deut. xxxi. 26, probably also was deposited by its side, which was found by Hilkiah, in the days of Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14. The ark, doubtless, perished when the temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, but a copy of it was made for the latter temples. The Jews have a tradition, that the original ark was concealed by Jeremiah, and will be found hereafter. No human ingenuity, however, could bring again the Shekinah, the cloud of glory, over the mercy-seat, or the spirit of prophecy. The urim and thummim, and the fire kindled from heaven, also were wanting, as well as the original ark. In all these respects the Jews admit that the latter temple was inferior to that of Solomon.

In one respect the glory of the latter house exceeded that of the former. Hag. ii. 7—9, is here adverted to. In the latter temple appeared "the Desire of all nations," the Messiah, the Son of God when manifest in the flesh. And this prophetic declaration, preserved by the Jews themselves, is one of the strong proofs of Scripture that Jesus was the Messiah, since to no other person did this description apply; and as that temple has long since ceased to exist, it cannot now be applied to any other. In that temple was proclaimed spiritual peace through the blood and righteousness of Christ, who is the Prince of peace, our Peace, the Author of peace between God and man. Him the Lord put in this place, the temple: there the gospel of peace was preached, and from thence it went

forth into all the world. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" The Jews did neglect it, and their state as a nation and as individuals, during so many centuries, is a clear and convincing answer to the inquiry.

The glorious appearance presented by this inner pile of building, is described by Josephus. "To strangers who were approaching, it appeared at a distance like a mountain covered with snow, for where it was not decorated with plates of gold, it was extremely white and glistening." On the top were pointed spikes of gold, to prevent any birds from resting upon the building and polluting it. He describes some stones in that structure as more than eighty feet long, nine high, and eleven wide. Well might the disciples exclaim, "Master, see what manner of stones, and what buildings are here!" Mark xiii. 1; and be surprised at our Saviour's declaration, that not one of these stones should be left upon another, and that this destruction should come to pass before that generation had ceased to exist. But it was the declaration of Him who is Truth itself; it was fulfilled as every other of his words has been or shall be. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but His words shall not pass away. The accounts of the contests about the temple, during the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, and its final destruction, are very interesting, but they belong more properly to the history of the Jews than to the present work.

The description of the latter temple is now nearly finished. Along the sides, and at the west end of the main building of the temple, were thirty-eight chambers in three stories. These were chiefly used as store houses, for laying up the sacred utensils, and the offerings made for the sustenance of the priests and the services of the altar. Over these chambers was a flat terrace, to which persons could ascend by a staircase at the north-east. Two rooms over the holy places were entered from the south-west corner of this terrace, by an ascent of steps 18 feet high. The floor of these rooms being that height above the terrace, allowed space for the windows which lighted the holy place. The rooms were of the same length as the holy places below

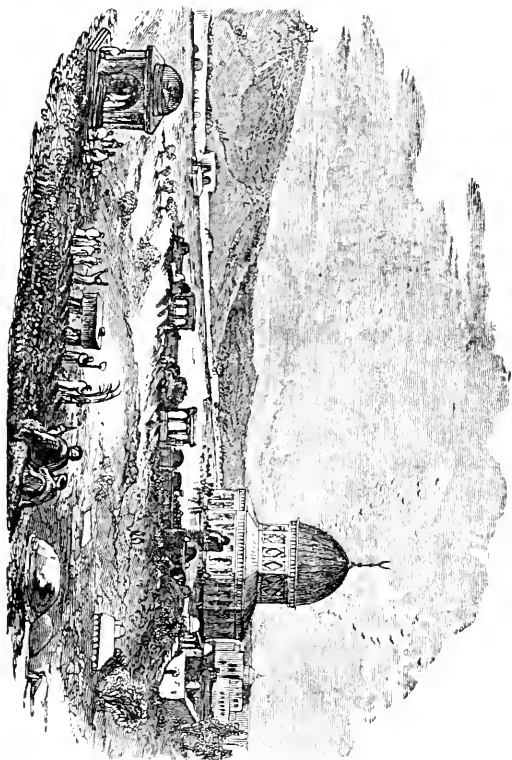
them ; and two cedar trees, laid sloping, as inclined planes, led from them to the top of the temple. The use of these rooms is not clearly stated. From the one over the most holy place workmen were let down through trap-doors to repair or clean the walls.

At the north-west corner of the inner court was a large apartment called the fire-room, where a fire was kept constantly burning in cold weather and at night. Here the priests in attendance, who were not posted as centinels, remained during the night. It was a sort of guard-room to the temple ; and they slept in their clothes, on benches placed round the room. The buildings in the several courts have already been noticed, as containing a vast number of apartments, but the particulars are too uncertain to justify any attempt at describing them.

The whole extent occupied by the courts and buildings is estimated at somewhat more than 19 acres. A large part of the ground beneath the surface, it is said, was excavated and arched, to prevent the possibility of pollution from any secret graves ; thus repositories for various purposes were also supplied.

The space which was the site of the temple is thus described by Maundrell, who visited Jerusalem in the year 1696, as it appeared from the terrace of a house said to occupy the site where the temple of Pilate stood. He says, "From thence is a full view of the place where the temple stood ; and this is the only prospect of it that is allowed ; for whatever Christian goes within the borders of this ground, must forfeit either his life or his religion. A fitter place for an august building could not be found in the whole world. It lies upon the top of Mount Moriah, opposite Mount Olivet, the valley of Jehoshaphat lying between. It was about 590 of my steps in length, and 370 in breadth. In the middle of this area now stands a mosque of an octagonal figure, said to be built on the ground where formerly stood the holy of holies." Brown calculates, that besides the square, measuring 500 cubits each way, surrounded by the outer wall of the court of the Gentiles, the space described by Maundrell would leave more than three acres for the tower Antonia, and the adjacent public walks.

THE MOSQUE OF OMAR, AND THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.



With respect to this mosque, an Arabian historian relates, that when the caliph Omar took Jerusalem, he inquired of the patriarch for a proper place to build a mosque, and was conducted to the site of Solomon's temple. Subsequent caliphs added to the buildings, and inclosed the rock with walls. The crusaders used it as a place for Christian worship; but the sultan Saladin restored it to its former use, and it has ever since continued to be a Mohammedan mosque. This application of the spot has prevented it from being crowded with common buildings, and the remembrance of the site has thus been preserved to the present day. Every one who has visited Jerusalem, or who has seen a good pictorial representation of its present state, must have felt interested on observing the considerable space thus distinctly marked, as having been the scene of many of the most memorable events recorded in Scripture.

Belzoni found means, a few years since, in the disguise of a Turk, to obtain a hasty and superficial view of this building and the court around it, while some repairs were going forward; and Dr. Richardson having, by his medical skill, gained the favour of the Turkish ecclesiastical authorities, obtained permission, in 1821, to visit this mosque, disguised as a Turk. He has given a minute description of the buildings within the inclosure, which he was told is about 1489 feet long by 995 feet wide; but as these are wholly of Turkish origin, they have no reference to our present subject. Other travellers have also gained admittance. Among other objects of attention, is a stone on the top of the wall, impending over a tremendous precipice, on which the Turks believe that Mohammed is to sit at the day of judgment, and to judge the re-embodied spirits which will then, as they believe, be assembled beneath in the valley of Jehoshaphat.

Perhaps, among all the considerations which have reference to the temple, none is more affecting than the extreme veneration of the Jews for this pile of building. Some of the psalms which were composed during the Babylonish captivity strongly evidence this; and there are several instances of it in the Old Testament, when this

feeling was heightened to superstitious regard. The law required solemn and holy conduct in all who approached the courts of the Lord to worship therein, and persons were excluded under some circumstances of ceremonial uncleanness; but the Jewish rabbis added many other restrictions. Weapons of offence were rightly excluded from the house of God, and no man might enter it even with a staff. This was to teach that, in their worship, it was not right to lean on any staff but God; and it accounts for our Saviour making and using a whip of small cords to drive out the buyers and sellers, as a staff was not allowed in the courts even for driving the cattle. None were to enter with shoes, or with dust on their feet; nor was it lawful for the worshippers to have money about them, yet we find tables of money-changers placed there! None were to make the courts a thoroughfare, or to use any irreverent gesture; spitting was absolutely forbidden. While attending the service, the worshipper was to stand with his feet even, his eyes cast downwards, and his hands crossed. However weary, he must not sit down in the court of the Israelites, nor in that of the priests. When they departed, they were to go backward till they had left the inner court where the altar stood, and must not quit the temple by the same gate through which they entered. These scruples entertained after the captivity, strongly contrast with the neglect, and worse than neglect, manifested towards the building during the reigns of the idolatrous kings of Judah. The anathemas and penalties denounced against any one who should enter the courts of the temple, while ceremonially unclean, were most severe.

The least slight towards the temple, real or supposed, excited the bitterest rage of a Jew. Not to mention Paul and Stephen, we have a striking instance of this in the case of our blessed Lord. The rulers of the Jews seized upon an expression uttered by him some years before, and misrepresenting his words, gave them the semblance of disrespect to the temple; they did this when they had in vain sought for any other plausible ground of accusation which might influence the people. The mere

assertion, though not well supported, that Jesus had been heard to declare he was able to destroy the temple, was considered as impious guilt, too great to be forgiven. And when expiring on the cross under this charge, the same people who, a few days before had hailed Jesus of Nazareth as the son of David, viewed him with contempt and scorn, and taunted him with the words they supposed him to have spoken.

The same typical meaning may be applied to the temple as to the tabernacle; and as it was supported by a strong foundation, it may further remind us of the sure Foundation, even Christ Jesus, that only Foundation, in reference to whom the inspired apostle declared, "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward," 1 Cor. iii. 14. And let us remember, that the tabernacle and the temple, in their typical and figurative meaning, were as maps of the gospel land we now inhabit. They represented by shadows, or at best through a glass darkly, truths now clearly set before us. It has been said, The glories of that blessed country *then* could only be faintly discerned through the smoke of the sacrifices; *now* the fruitful fields, and refreshing streams, and rich prospects of that heavenly Canaan, are clearly revealed.





## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE LEVITES—THE PRIESTS—THE HIGH PRIEST.

THE ritual services of the Mosaic dispensation necessarily required a number of persons, whose time should be devoted to the due performance of the ceremonies. The main principle also of that dispensation required ministers of various ranks and gradations, suitable to the splendour of that peculiar or national worship, which recognized the presence of Jehovah, dwelling among them as a monarch in his palace. The variety also of the offerings, and the precision with which the attendant ceremonies were to be performed, demanded constant practice, as well as clear instruction in the first instance. All this was provided for, by the selection of one whole family or tribe, whose entire attention should be devoted to sacred things. Here was an important change from the system of the patriarchal dispensation, when the head of the family offered sacrifices, and conducted the worship of those under his charge, and the eldest son assisted in preparing and slaying the sacrifices, and succeeded to the sacred duties, in addition to the authority as ruler of the family. Esau, when he despised his birthright, and sold it for a mess of pottage, Gen. xxv. 34, gave up his right to officiate in these holy services. Hence he is spoken of by the apostle, Heb. xii. 16, 17, as a profane person.

There is another reason for this selection of one tribe to wait at the altar, Numb. iii. 13. "Because all the firstborn are mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast." From the context we learn, that God having appointed Aaron and his family to be the priests under the new dispensation, gave them the whole tribe of Levi, to which Aaron belonged, to assist in the ritual services, instead of the eldest child of every family in Israel. The superior advantages of such an arrangement are obvious in several views. And

the waiting on the priest's office was not the only service for which the Levites were set apart. They were to diffuse religious and moral instruction throughout the nation. This has been already noticed. In the last solemn discourse of Moses, he speaks thus of the double service of the tribe of Levi, addressing himself to the Most High, "Let thy Urim and thy Thummim be with thy holy one; they have observed thy word and kept thy covenant; they shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law; they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar." Another solemn injunction respecting public instruction had previously been given, Deut. xxxi. 10—13.

All the institutions respecting this tribe were calculated to give them weight and influence in Israel which, provided they acted according to the Divine injunctions, would be eminently beneficial. The law or word of God was committed to them, that they might study its contents, and be able to instruct the people in all its requirements. They were relieved from secular cares. Their habitations were not confined to one particular district. They had cities assigned in every tribe, but were relieved from the labour and care of cultivating the ground. The tenth-part of the produce of the soil, and portions of many of the offerings, were allotted for their sustenance. Thus, as Graves observes, "deriving their maintenance from a source which would necessarily fail, if the worship and laws of God were neglected, they were deeply interested in their support." Being especially devoted to the study of the Divine law, which was a code of moral justice, as well as of religious worship, they must have possessed considerable influence over the people. They were every where at hand, ready to admonish and instruct. No others were admitted to discharge any sacred office, and even the administration of justice necessarily called for their assistance. From Deut. xvii. 9, and xix. 17, it appears that a connexion between the tribe of Levi and the judicial office was designed to exist. They also had the care of the public records and genealogies. The express mention of the Levite, Deut. xxvi. 11, may imply the residence of this

tribe among other families ; and the history of Micah and the Danites shows that the presence of a Levite in a family or community was much desired ; also, that persons of that tribe were accustomed to go forth from their cities to seek places where they might be received. But yet, as will be seen, when we come to treat of the family and synagogue worship of the Jews, the office of instructors was not exclusively confined to the Levites, whose primary duties were those called ritual, in attendance on the sacred ceremonies of the tabernacle and temple.

During the abode of the Israelites in the wilderness, the duties of the LEVITES were numerous and heavy. They had the whole charge of the tabernacle, and during its removals had to carry most of the materials, as well as the sacred utensils. Their duties are stated, Numbers iv. When settled in the land of Israel, many of these ceased ; and in Joshua xxi. we find the names of cities appointed for their residence. Some Levites were still engaged in the services of the tabernacle, but we have no regular account of the distribution of their duties till the time of David and Solomon, who appointed them to attend the temple in regular rotation, and when not thus employed at Jerusalem they were dispersed through the country on other public duties. 1 Chron. xxvi. 32, states that David made 2,700 Levites rulers over the two tribes and a half located beyond Jordan, for every matter pertaining to God, and affairs of the king. Their attention having been directed to the Divine law from early youth, they must have possessed peculiar qualifications for these offices. From 1 Chron. xxiii. 5, and 2 Chron. xix. 8, it may be learned that they were employed by David and Jehoshaphat, generally, as officers and judges. David allotted 6000 for these duties ; 4000 were to be porters or guards, and 4000 to be singers and musicians. At that time, the whole number of the tribe, aged thirty years and upwards, was 38,300, and the remaining 24,000 were divided into twenty-four courses of 1000 each ; see 1 Chron. xxiii. 24, and 2 Chron. xxxi. 2 ; these afterwards attended the temple, each course for a week in rotation, and all the duties of the temple were discharged by the Levites. As the time for the

attendance of each course was ascertained, they knew at what periods to go up to Jerusalem. From among them the guards who protected the temple, and kept order in its courts, were selected. The singers bore an important part in the temple services, and for their use many of the psalms were composed. Heman, Asaph, and Jeduthun, were chiefs among them. A particular account of the porters and musicians is given, 1 Chron. xxv. xxvi.; and we learn, from 2 Chron. viii. 14, that the arrangement of David was confirmed by Solomon, when the temple was completed. From 1 Chron. ix. 22, it would appear, that these regulations were partly made by Samuel, whether for the service of the tabernacle, or in prospect of the temple establishment, is not distinctly stated.

Scripture does not describe any dress assigned for the Levites, and Josephus says it was done only eight years before the destruction of the temple, when they obtained permission to wear a linen tunic like the priests, which gave considerable umbrage. The period of service for the Levites, was settled by David to be from twenty to fifty years of life. Besides all the general duties of the temple and tabernacle, the Levites assisted the priests in killing the sacrifices, and sang during the offerings, see 1 Chron. xxiii. 31, and 2 Chron. xxxi. 2; but they did not themselves offer the sacrifices or burn the incense, unless in cases of necessity, or when the priests were remiss in their duties, as at the time of the reformation by Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxix. 34. The Levites were assisted in the most laborious duties by the Nethinims, who are supposed to have been descendants of the remains of the Canaanites, principally the Gibeonites. These appear, from Neh. iii. 26, to have had a place at Jerusalem called Ophel, near the temple, for their residence. The word Nethinim signifies given, or devoted: their service was accounted honourable, so as to be mentioned in Ezra and Nehemiah next after the Levites.

The priests were the descendants of Aaron, chosen from the tribe of Levi exclusively, to discharge the higher duties of the public service. The name, when applied to men, signified those who have near access to the king, as

it is used, 1 Chron. xviii. 17. They prepared the victims and offered the sacrifices; they kept up the fire on the altar, attended to the lights in the golden candlestick, and made the loaves of shew-bread. Every morning and evening a priest, appointed by lot, brought a censer of incense into the sanctuary, kindled with fire from the altar. The ark of the covenant, in the wilderness, and in the times of the Judges, was especially under their charge. The priests were divided by David into twenty-four classes, which order was retained by Solomon, Hezekiah, and Jehoshaphat. Descendants from only four of these classes returned from the Babylonish captivity, Ezra ii. 36—39; Neh. vii. 39—42. These were subdivided into the same number as before, of twenty-four classes, distinguished by the original names, and each class was subdivided into three ranks. The chief of each class appointed an entire family to offer the sacrifices of each day; at the close of the week they all united together, and on the sabbaths the next class began to officiate. The members of each family drew lots for the offices they were to perform, which will be described under the daily service of the temple. But the services of the priests, like those of the Levites, included other duties beside the rites of the temple. It is expressly noted, 2 Chron. xv. 3, that Israel had long been without "a teaching priest;" and, Mal. ii. 7, that "the priest's lips should keep knowledge," and that the people should "seek the law at his mouth, because he was the messenger of the Lord of hosts."

In 2 Chron. xvii. 7, is a full account of the manner in which Jehoshaphat sent some of his princes, with priests and Levites, as an itinerant ministry, to explain the law, and teach the people throughout all the cities of Judah. Something like this was adopted in England at the time of the Reformation, when, under the sanction of king Edward the sixth and his council, some of the eminent preachers among the reformers were sent to travel through the land. And there are in our days dense masses of ignorant persons who cannot be got at, and to whom instruction cannot be offered, unless measures out of the usual course are resorted to. The number of the officiating

priests is not distinctly mentioned in Scripture. Those residing at Jerusalem, soon after the captivity, were one thousand one hundred and ninety-two; see Neh. xi. 10—14. Josephus states, at a later period, there were four tribes of priests, each of five thousand persons. A considerable number lived at Jericho, Luke x. 31, 32, from whence they came up to Jerusalem when their duties required; the rest were dispersed through the land.

The genealogies of the priests were preserved in the temple, and all who sought the office had to prove their descent from the children of Aaron. Health of body and holiness of life were indispensable. A hundred and forty personal blemishes are enumerated as excluding from the services of the priesthood. No particular ceremony appears to have been observed at their admission, but only the performance of some office of their order, at a sacrifice, after they had been very strictly examined by the Sanhedrim, as to their descent and freedom from blemish. They were not distinguished by their dress unless engaged at the altar.

The official dress, as described Exod. xxviii. Lev. viii. was provided at the public expense; and when the articles became old they were unravelled, to form wicks for the lamps required at the nightly rejoicings during the feast of tabernacles. The priests' garments were linen drawers; and tunics, or long garments with sleeves, closely fitted to the body, made of linen, which it is considered was wrought in checker work, somewhat like our diaper cloth; with girdles, or long pieces of embroidered linen, encircling the body twice, and hanging down before, which, having woollen mixed in the fabric, might not be worn under other circumstances. They wore mitres, or tiaras; these were turbans of several rolls of linen twisted round the head; they originally were pointed at the top, but in later times were flat. The peculiarity of the priests' habit, it has been remarked, might remind them of the necessity of man's being clothed with other righteousness than his own; and the anointing may show the need of the unction of the Holy One, in all his gifts and graces.

The maintenance of the priest was from the tenths of

the tithes received by the Levites, a share of the offerings, the skins of the animals sacrificed, and the redemption money paid for every first-born Israelite, Numb. xviii. 15, 16. Also, the first-born of clean animals, and the first-fruits of the crops, varying from a fortieth to a sixtieth. They also received the fruit of trees in the fourth year of their growth, and a share of spoils taken in warfare. In 2 Chron. xxxi. is an interesting account of the abundant offering brought in by the people as the portions of the priests, and as freewill offerings upon the reformation by Hezekiah, when the nation rejoiced under the administration of a religious king and a faithful ministry. Such were the principal revenues of the priests; sufficient, as Horne observes, "to keep them above want, yet not so ample as to enable them to accumulate riches or impoverish the laity." By this wise constitution they were deprived of all power to injure the liberty of other tribes, or endanger the national polity. Some priests are spoken of as mighty in valour, 1 Chron. xii. 27, 28; and Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, had his name among David's thirty worthies, 1 Chron. xi. 22—25. This was not inconsistent with the principle of the Jewish theocracy, which regarded Jehovah as the supreme Monarch of Israel; and we repeatedly find the priests mentioned as going forth with the armies to battle. The services of those designated as porters, also, were rather the duties of guards and sentinels.

The HIGH PRIEST was over all the other priests. He was the final judge in all controversies, and in later ages held the next rank to the prince, and at times united both offices in his own person. In the days of the New Testament, all who had filled the office retained the title. When the high priest was infirm, or had committed any crime, (for his office did not exempt him from legal control,) or if he had been exposed to any pollution, so as to disqualify him for a time, a substitute, called the sagan, was appointed to perform his duties. Upon the entrance of the high priest on his office, he was invested with the sacred robes, and anointed with the holy oil, Exod. xxx. 23—25; but, after the captivity, the anointing ceased. Lev. viii. 23, 30, shows that in the consecration of Aaron and his

sons, they were sprinkled with the blood of the animal sacrificed at that ceremony. This appears to have been imitated and carried further by the heathen. At the consecration of the high priest of Cybele, he was placed in what literally was a shower bath of blood; and when he came forth, with his head and vestments covered with blood, he was considered as so holy that the multitude dared not to approach him.

The robes of the high priest, in addition to those worn by other priests, were: 1. The coat, or robe of the ephod, made of blue wool; the hem or border was ornamented with seventy-two golden bells, placed alternately with as many pomegranates of embroidered work. 2. The ephod, a vest fastened on the shoulders, reaching to the heels behind, but only a little below the waist in front. It was of fine twisted linen, wrought with gold and purple. On each of the shoulders was a clasp, in which was set a precious stone engraved with the names of the tribes. 3. The breastplate of judgment was a piece of cloth like the ephod, eleven inches square, set with twelve precious



stones, also engraved with the names of the tribes. This had something to do with what is called the urim and



thummin, two words meaning “lights” and “perfections,” about which learned men have been very much puzzled. The general and most probable opinion is, that these words mean the twelve precious stones in the breastplate. In the description of that article, Lev. viii. 8, those stones are not mentioned as in Exodus, but it is said that the urim and thummim were in the breastplate. We know, from different passages of Scripture, that when the high priest went to ask counsel or advice of Jehovah, he was arrayed with this breastplate, and it was called asking counsel after the judgment of urim, Numb. xxvii. 21. This solemn consultation was only to be made for the principal public personages, and on public occasions; and some Jewish writers think it was resorted to only in the tabernacle. Others have thought that the urim and thummim were three precious stones, two inscribed as affirmative and negative, and one left blank, which were solemnly drawn as lots in answers to questions proposed, and they refer to the cases of Achan, Josh. vii. and that of Jonathan, I Sam. xiv. 41, as confirming this view. But, as Parkhurst says, it may suffice us to know, that this was a singular piece of workmanship, which the high priest was obliged to wear upon solemn occasions, as one of the conditions upon which God engaged to give him answers. Perhaps the use of it was to be a sign that the Lord would give the high priest an inward light, and make him know the Divine will as to what was inquired after; see Dent. xxxiii. 8; 1 Sam. xxviii. 6; Ezra ii. 63; Neh. vii. 65. 4. The high priest wore a crown or mitre, on the front of which a plate of pure gold was fastened by a blue riband, engraved with Hebrew words, meaning “Holiness to the Lord.” A full description of these robes is in Exod. xxviii. and xxxix.

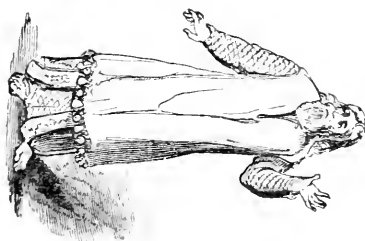
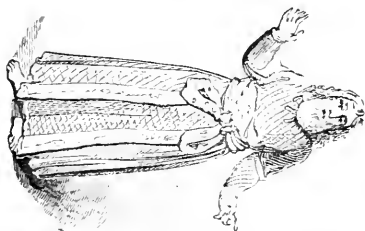
The high priest was arrayed with the splendid garments, as represented on page 76, on solemn occasions, when he ministered in the tabernacle and temple; but at other times he wore the common dress of the priests, represented in the figure, No. 2, page 79. The linen drawers are represented by No. 1; and the high priest's coat by No. 3.

The feet of the priests were always bare while they

ministered, in token of reverence to the Divine presence; see Exod. iii. 5; Josh. v. 15. During the services, this standing barefooted upon the marble pavement of the temple must have been severely felt, especially in winter, when the body was frequently bathed, and the hands and feet continually washed in cold water, and the officiating priests stood upon the cold stones in linen dresses.

The high priesthood at first was held for life; but Solomon deprived Abiathar of the office, for being concerned in Adonijah's treasonable practices, 1 Kings ii. 27. At the first, it passed from father to son, to Eli, having continued in the descendants of Eleazar, the son of Aaron. When Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli, met with an untimely death, as the just reward of their wickedness, the high priesthood passed to the descendants of Ithamar, the second son of Aaron, 1 Sam. ii. 35, 36. Josephus, indeed, asserts that Eli was of the family of Ithamar. But, in the reign of Solomon the high priesthood was again in the family of Eleazar, as Zadok had the office, 1 Kings ii. 35; 1 Chron. vi. 8. In that branch it remained till the captivity. During this period, it is supposed that the high priest was elected by the other priests, or by an assembly partly consisting of them.

After the captivity, the first high priest was Joshua, the son of Josedech, a descendant of Eleazar. The succession then passed into a private Levitical family. Afterwards the office was held by some of the Maccabean princes, who were of the family of Aaron, of the course of Jehoiarib, and by them a triple crown of gold was added to the mitre, they being princes at the same time. The high priesthood ought to have been for life, but under the Romans, and at an earlier period, under Herod, the dignity, sanctity, and authority of the office were almost done away. Even at a still earlier date, after the captivity, the office frequently was sold to the highest bidder, and latterly sometimes to persons not of the families of the priests. Often they were changed every year, which explains how several high priests were in existence at the same time, as those who had held the office, though only for a short time, retained the title. Ananus, or Annas, so often mentioned in the



DRESS OF THE JEWISH PRIESTS.

Gospels, was himself high priest for several years, and saw the station afterwards filled by five sons, and some of his sons-in-law, which gave him considerable influence in the government, even when out of office; see John xviii. 13, and Acts iv. 6. Caiaphas actually was the high priest, but Annas was so called when Peter and John were brought before the council, either having filled that office, or then being the sagan.

The above statement includes the chief particulars relative to the office of the priesthood under the Mosaic law. The Scripture declares that Aaron and his successors were figures of the great High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; and several writers have shown, that the circumstances relative to the office, even the articles of their apparel, had a spiritual meaning. These conveyed instruction, being emblematical of the beauties of the mind which are ornamental to the soul, implying that the priests should be clothed with righteousness, *Psa. cxxxii. 9*. The desire to spiritualize, sometimes may have carried writers too far; but as the high priests were types of Christ we must readily admit that these injunctions are not unworthy of God, nor useless to man, and the subject deserves most serious attention. Especially contemplate the high priest as intercessor for the people, the only person permitted to enter into the most holy place to present the supplications of Israel. When assured that Christ brings all the wants, distresses, and trials of his people before the Father, making them his own, and pleading his sufferings for them, surely we may safely venture our all upon the work of his priesthood. Christ is a High Priest, who is a reconciler indeed; who presents his people without spot to God, clothed in the robe of his righteousness. All the Mosaic priesthood has, it is true, now ceased in Christ the end of the law, see *Heb. vii. viii.* but there is a metaphorical priesthood, which the New Testament ascribes to all Christians without exception; thus the apostle addresses the whole body of believers as a royal priesthood, *1 Pet. ii. 9*; and, in many respects, the resemblance between the priesthood under the law, and that of the faithful under the gospel,

is easily traced. To this there will be occasion again to refer, when speaking of the sacrifices, in a subsequent chapter of this work.

See Aaron, God's anointed priest,  
Within the veil appear,  
In robes of mystic meaning drest,  
Presenting Israel's prayer.

The plate of gold which crowns his brows,  
His holiness describes ;  
His breast displays, in shining rows,  
The names of all the tribes.

With the atoning blood he stands  
Before the mercy-seat ;  
And clouds of incense from his hands  
Arise with odour sweet.

Urim and Thummim near his heart,  
In rich engravings worn,  
The sacred light of truth impart,  
To teach and to adorn.

Through him the eye of faith descries  
A greater priest than he ;  
Thus Jesus pleads above the skies,  
For you, my friends, and me.

He bears the names of all his saints  
Deep on his heart engraved ;  
Attentive to the state and wants  
Of all his love has saved.

In him a holiness complete,  
Light and perfections shine :  
And wisdom, grace, and glory meet ;  
A Saviour all divine.

The blood, which as a priest he bears  
For sinners, is his own ;  
The incense of his prayers and tears  
Perfumes the holy throne.

In him my weary soul has rest  
Though I am weak and vile ;  
I read my name upon his breast,  
And see the Father smile.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE DAILY SERVICE OF THE TEMPLE.

THE manner in which the daily service of the temple was latterly conducted may be next described. Most of the priests, when on duty, resided in a building near the north-west corner of the court of Israel, called the fire-room: see the plan. Their first care, early in the morning, was to bathe their whole bodies, which was not repeated during the day, though they washed their hands and feet every time they had left their duties and returned to them. Perhaps our Saviour alluded to this, John xiii. 10. The priests, having bathed and dressed, waited for the coming of him who was called president of the lots. It was about cock-crowing, but the precise time was uncertain, which our Lord's exhortation, Mark xiii. 35, 36, may be considered to illustrate. On his arrival, the priests divided into two companies, and passing round the opposite sides of the court, with lamps or torches, they examined that all was safe, and met at the gate Nicanor, where they summoned an officer, called the pastry-man, to make the cakes for the high priest's meat-offering. They then went into the chamber called Gezit, and having fixed upon a number, they stood in a circle, and each held up some of his fingers, more or less as he pleased. The president then directed one to take off his bonnet or turban, and counting his fingers, proceeded to the next person, and so counted on till he reached the number already settled. This method of counting fingers was occasioned by a superstition as to counting persons. The priest, with whom this enumeration ended, was to begin to remove the ashes from the altar of burnt-offering, a post considered honourable, and thus all contention for it was prevented. This plan was adopted in consequence of a priest having his leg broken, by being pushed off the ascent, in rushing forward with others to the altar. Having washed his hands and feet, the priest filled a silver shovel with ashes from the principal fire, separated from the unconsumed

wood and flesh; he then descended to the pavement, and laid the ashes in the appointed place. The others then came forward, and assisted in the work, removing the ashes to a clean place without the city, renewing the fires, and replacing on the wood any parts of the offerings of the day before, not yet consumed. The priests having returned to the room Gezit, by a similar plan of counting, allotted thirteen particular services to as many priests; the others were to act as assistants.

The next proceeding was to offer the daily morning sacrifice of a lamb. The president directed one to go and see whether it was time. He went to the top of a part of the building, and when he saw the dawn, said, "It is day!" The president inquired, "Is the heaven bright up to Hebron?" On being answered in the affirmative, the lamb was ordered to be brought. The appointed priests examined for the last time that it was without blemish, and proceeded to slaughter it on the north side of the altar. The other priests meanwhile brought forward the ninety-three silver and gold vessels used in the ordinary daily services of the temple, from one of which water was given to the lamb to drink. Those priests who had the keys of the gates, opened the doors of the court of Israel and of the holy place. The noise of the opening of the latter was the signal for killing the lamb. The silver trumpets were sounded as a signal for the musicians to be at their desks, and for the station men, who represented the people of Israel, to be at their places. Meanwhile, the lamps in the golden candlestick were trimmed, the incense altar prepared, and the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the large altar. The priests then returned to the room Gezit, and offered the following prayer:—"Thou hast loved us, O Lord our God, with an everlasting love: with great and abundant compassion hast thou compassionated us, O our Father, our King: for our fathers' sakes who trusted in thee, and whom thou didst teach statutes of life: so be gracious to us also, O our Father, O most merciful Father. O thou Compassionate One, pity us; and put into our hearts to know, understand, obey, learn, teach, observe, do, and perform all the words

of the doctrine of thy law in love. And enlighten our eyes by thy law, and cause our hearts to cleave to thy commandments, and unite our hearts to love and fear thy name." The priests then recited the commandments, and the contents of their phylacteries, and again had recourse to lots to fix who should offer incense, and who should lay the pieces of the lamb on the fire. Two persons having been selected for the first duty, proceeded to the sanctuary for that purpose, and joined two others who had trimmed the lamps. When all was prepared, three went into the porch, and only one remained to burn the incense. He waited till the president called to him to offer, which was not done till all the priests had retired from the space between the porch and the altar, and the people were ready to worship. The incense was then kindled, the holy place filled with perfume, and the people recited prayers, first for the heathens who were friendly to the Jewish people, and then for their own nation. These prayers have been translated by Lightfoot; and it is well observed, that on comparison with the most reverend and best of the prayers offered by the heathen to their gods, we may plainly see the vast advantages a land possesses by being favoured with Divine revelation. In the emphatic words of the psalmist, "Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah," *Psa. xxxiii. 12*. However, the prayers used in the later times were disfigured by vain repetitions, and destitute of that unction which exists in the prayers of the gospel dispensation, wherein reference is made to the Saviour, the Lamb of God, who died to take away the sins of the world, and who pleads for his people, offering up their prayers with the sweet incense of his intercession. The office of burning incense was accounted particularly honourable, and could only be performed once by the same priest during his administration. It fell by lot to Zacharias at the time mentioned, *Luke i. 9*.

After these prayers were ended, the pieces of the lamb were laid reverently upon the fire. When this was done, the four priests who had been in the temple appeared upon the steps of the porch. They stood looking humbly towards the ground, their hands raised above their



heads, and the one who had burned the incense solemnly pronounced the blessing, Numb. vi. 24—26. This explains, Luke i. 9. The daily meat-offering was then offered, next the meat-offering for the high priest, and lastly the drink-offering. At the conclusion the Levites began the song of praise, pausing at times while the trumpets sounded, and the people worshipped. The psalms regularly sung, were the 24th, 48th, 82nd, 94th, 81st, 93rd, and 92nd; one upon each successive day of the week, the last upon the sabbath. This selection, it is said, was made with some reference to each day of the creation. Other psalms probably were sung during the day, while the sacrifices of individuals were offering. On the sabbath also there was an additional sacrifice, during which, in the morning the Levites sang the song of Moses, Deut. xxxii. and in the evening that in Exod. xv. each divided into six parts, one for each of six successive weeks. Some think there is a reference to this in Rev. xv. 3, where the saints who had reached heaven, the place of everlasting sabbath or rest, are said to sing the song of Moses. The singing was accompanied by instrumental music, mentioned in Kings and Chronicles. There never were fewer than twelve singers, frequently more. On this occasion also, the young children of the Levites were allowed to stand between their fathers' feet and join in the psalm, though forbidden to enter the court at other times.

The above description refers to the ritual services of the temple every morning. The duties of the priests, during the middle of the day, varied, according to circumstances; but some were always in readiness to offer the sacrifices any Israelites might come to present, whether a freewill-offering or to expiate an offence. Though the sacrifices sometimes were few, at other times they were numerous, especially at the great festivals.

The evening service began at the ninth hour, about three or four o'clock, and was nearly the same as that of the morning; the same duties being, for the most part, performed by the same persons, and nearly in the same order.

Such was the daily routine of the temple service; there

is much in it very impressive, although many of the circumstances described sound strange to us as connected with the worship of God. These ritual observances were designed for the whole nation, to keep before their view continually the Great Atonement now so distinctly set before us in the gospel. There were services of prayer and praise throughout their land, similar to our present public worship.

The regularity and minute exactness with which every circumstance was performed, were very suitable to the service of that Being who is a God of order and not of confusion, and widely different from the sacrifices and services of the heathen. The early hour of the morning sacrifice, which began with the first dawn—the nature of the sacrificial ceremonies, founded on the admitted fact that all mankind were sinners, and leading to Him who was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world—the awful silence at prayer—the solemn benediction from the steps of the holy place—the general and harmonious song of praise, and the open and regular repetition of all these services—very strongly contrast with the abominations of the heathen rites, concerning which the apostle so emphatically says, “It is a shame even to speak of those things which were done of them in secret,” in their, falsely so called, religious services.

There were various minute regulations to ensure the reverent and orderly conduct of the people at large, when attending the services in the inner court. Many of these became mere forms in the latter days of the Jewish state; some were burdensome; and others, which were wholly of their own devising, were trifling, or even absurd.

The sagan, it has been stated, acted as the substitute for the high priest, or as his assistant. Zephaniah, mentioned, 2 Kings xxv. 18, as the second priest, probably was this officer. From the priests were selected two overseers of the treasuries, seven overseers of the gates and chambers where the vestments and utensils were deposited; also deputy collectors, the president of the weekly course, and the heads of the houses of their fathers. There were fifteen overseers to superintend the due performance of

various duties. Among them, we need only mention three : “the man of the mountain of the Lord’s house,” whose duty it was to visit the nightly guards, the Levites ; the overseer of the sick—the priests were often unwell from being thinly clothed and bare-footed during the services ; and the overseer of the water, who had to take care that the temple was abundantly supplied. Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night, is supposed by some to have held this office.

The Levites acted as guards during the night, at twenty-one out of twenty-four stations, in the courts of the temple. Priests were stationed at the other three. These guards were visited by the officer called “the man of the mountain.” If any Levite was found asleep, he was beaten upon the spot, and his garments set on fire by the torches carried by those who accompanied this visitor. Some think this is alluded to Rev. xvi. 15. It has also been thought, that Psalm 134 was repeated by this officer and the guards when visited.

Bless ye the Lord with solemn rite,  
In hymns extol his name ;  
Ye who, within his house by night,  
Watch round the altar’s flame.

Lift up your hands amid the place  
Where burns the sacred sign ;  
And pray, that thus Jehovah’s face  
O’er all the earth may shine.

From Zion, from his holy hill,  
The Lord our Maker send ;  
The perfect knowledge of his will,  
Salvation without end.

*Montgomery.*

The stationary men, or Israelites of the station, are not mentioned in Scripture ; but from the Jewish writings, we learn, that latterly there were twenty-four courses of persons, selected from the nation at large, who attended in rotation, in the same manner as the Levites. The objects in view in this appointment seem to have been, that there should always be a sufficient number of persons present at the temple services ; particularly, as the representatives of the nation, at the sacrifices appointed to be offered for the whole people. We do not learn their number, but are told that

those at home met the priests and Levites in the synagogues of their respective cities to pray, read the law, and intreat that the services of their brethren, then in attendance at Jerusalem, might be accepted for the people. They might not be trimmed by a barber, nor have their clothes washed during their attendance; they were expected especially to manifest devout behaviour during that time. They also then read a portion of Scripture daily, part of Genesis i. and ii.

Some of these daily services were added after the return from captivity; but the main outline was the same, from the first erection of the tabernacle to the destruction of the last temple by the Romans. During the reigns of the idolatrous kings the services were discontinued, particularly by Ahaz, who shut up the house of the Lord, and suffered the courts to be defiled with filth. After the captivity, the services were most regularly attended to; any omissions were occasioned, not by neglect on the part of the Jews, but by the violence of their enemies.



## CHAPTER X.

## THE SACRIFICES.

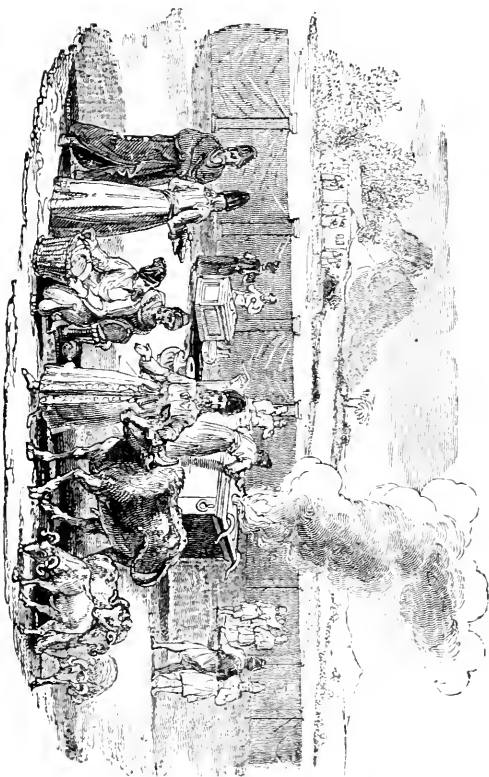
WE have attempted to describe the magnificent buildings erected for the Jewish rites, and the ministers by whom the services were performed, and the daily ritual. We now proceed to notice more particularly the sacrifices offered in these buildings and by these ministers. Here again the reader is referred, in the first instance, to the plain Scripture account, and should read the chapters in Leviticus which describe the offerings. We have seen how ancient was the use of sacrifices, and that all nations derived their customs as to these offerings from the same source; but when the nations fell into idolatry, they corrupted their rites of sacrifice, so as to make them sometimes ridiculous, and sometimes wicked actions. These abominations made the rules and laws for their sacrifices an honourable distinction to the Hebrew nation; and a blessing to mankind, as preserving the true and right principles of these institutions in their original purity. To some of the Scripture accounts we shall refer, while we describe the manner in which the Jews made their offerings in later times. There can be no doubt that the outward observance of the rites of the law, were then more regularly attended to than in earlier periods. Indeed, the imperfection of the law, as a covenant of works, is shown in a striking manner by the fact, that almost as soon as the people were settled in the land of Canaan, the Divine law was neglected; they forsook the Lord, of course omitting his sacrifices, and served Baalim and Ashtaroth, Judg. ii. 13.

The animals sacrificed at the Jewish altar were selected according to the circumstances and situation in life of the offerer, but only five sorts were accepted. These were bullocks, goats, sheep, turtle-doves, and young pigeons. Of all these burnt-offerings might be offered, so called from a Hebrew word signifying "to ascend," as in smoke or flame. And here bear in mind the object for which these offerings were made. The offerer, conscious of the evil of

his heart and the sins he had committed, was desirous that these should be done away by faith in the Messiah, typified by these sacrifices; or, having committed some actual offence, he wished to express his sorrow and desire of pardon through the same Great Sacrifice, and therefore brought his offering, according to the precept of the law in such a case.

The offerer was to appear "before the Lord," Lev. i. 3, to present himself in the court of the tabernacle, in front of it, or "before the door." When the temple was erected, this was understood to mean, in the court of Israel. Having brought the animal, he laid his hand upon its head while yet alive. This was emblematical; it denoted a solemn transfer of sin from himself to the victim, and that by its death he acknowledged his own liability to suffer. Thus every sacrifice was a type of Christ's suffering for us. This was usually done on the north side of the altar, among the rings. The offerer stood with his face towards the holy place, and said, "I have sinned; I have done perversely; I have rebelled and done thus;"—mentioning, either aloud or to himself, his offence, or the cause of the offering;—"but I return by repentance before Thee, and let this be my expiation." The animal was then fastened to one of the rings if large, or only its feet tied if small; its head was laid towards the south, and its face turned to the holy place. At first the animal often was struck, and the blood received, by the offerer; but in the time of the temple worship this was done by the priests, who were then more numerous and better skilled in doing it. The blood being received in sacred vessels, was taken to the altar, the vessels being handed by one to another as they were filled. The blood was sprinkled on the sides of the altar by a priest, as already stated. The person whose office it was to flay and divide the animal, hung it when dead upon one of the hooks, took off the skin, which was given to the priests, and dividing the carcase into several parts, handed them in succession to other priests in waiting, by whom they were carried to the ascent of the altar, and sprinkled with salt, Lev. ii. 13. To this Christ referred, Mark ix. 49, 50. It is considered that as salt preserves things from

THE JEWISH SACRIFICES IN THE COURT OF THE TABERNACLE.



putrefying, so the application of it to the sacrifices signified that the covenant of grace is lasting. The priest who had to lay the pieces on the altar then cut out the sinew mentioned Gen. xxxii. 32, threw it among the ashes, and laid the pieces upon the burning pile of wood, nearly in their natural position. In the holocausts, or whole burnt-offerings, all the pieces were consumed.

Birds were always brought in pairs: one was carried round the altar, its head wrung off, and the blood sprinkled, its feathers stripped, and its crop turned out and the contents cast among the ashes. The body was then cut open, salted as well as the head, and both were laid upon the fire.

The SIN-OFFERING was also a burnt-offering, but differed from what has been already described in some particulars. The victims were offered for sins committed inadvertently, or through ignorance, but which the offender would have deserved cutting off for, if done willingly. There were some other occasions enumerated in Leviticus, both public and private, when sin-offerings were to be made. The later Jewish doctors enumerated three hundred and sixty-five precepts; for forty-three of these, if broken, a sin-offering was required. The beast being killed, as already described, some of the blood was sprinkled in the holy place, before the veil, as well as on the altar, and if for individuals, also on the golden altar of incense. The fat and inwards only were burned upon the altar, the carcasses were given to the priests, who might eat the flesh within the temple; but in the sin-offering for the priests or for the congregation, Lev. iv. only the fat was burned on the altar; all the rest, even the skin, was carried to the place where the ashes used to be cast out, and then burned. The birds were offered as already described, but were given to the priests. They ate of the sacrifices after the services were concluded; so their chief meal must have been in the evening, but it was unlawful to eat after midnight.

The principle set forth by the sin-offerings, we have seen, was to seek atonement for sins committed from ignorance. And in several parts of the New Testament, as in Romans viii. 3; 2 Cor. v. 21, Christ is spoken of as a sin-offering, the original word meaning both sin and



the offering for sin, as Magee and others clearly show. But as the offerings went to the priests, in corrupt times they desired to promote their own advantage more than the devotion of the people. To this, perhaps, Hosea referred, chap. iv. 8, when he said, "They eat up the sin" (the original word also signifies sin-offering) "of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity." They sought their own advantage, instead of the reformation of the people, as the church of Rome has done with respect to the sale of indulgences, a proceeding which led to the reformation. Even in our day, as the author of "Rome in the Nineteenth Century" states, it is declared that any person may buy as many masses (and the church of Rome calls the service of the mass a sacrifice) as will free his or her soul from purgatory for 29,000 years, at the church of St. John Lateran, on the feast of that saint, for a very trifling sum; and the like at many other churches in Rome! The writer shrewdly remarks, "at Rome, at least, it would seem to be difficult, nay, impossible, to keep a rich man out of heaven." Let us thank God if *we* have "not so learned Christ."

Another class of sacrifices was the TRESPASS-OFFERINGS. These were for doubtful cases, as when a person was in doubt whether what he did were criminal or not, such as the case stated Lev. v. 2—6; but the Jewish doctors, in later times, added to the burden of this, as well as to other observances. The trespass-offerings evidently were designed that the conscience might be kept tender, and the appearance of evil be shunned; but evil-disposed priests gained many advantages by raising scruples; thus, as well as in other instances, laying upon the people a burden too heavy to be borne. Trespass-offerings were expressly ordered in the case of things stolen, unjustly gotten, or detained; for sacrilege; injury to a bondmaid; for the Nazarite; and for the leper. The carcasses of the animals in this case also went to the priests, except the fat and part of the inwards. There was an exception in the case of the leper. Part of the blood of the lamb was put upon the tip of his right ear, the thumb of his right hand, and the great toe of his right foot. The

sacrifice also, as less holy, was killed on the south side of the court, and the flesh might be eaten by any persons, and out of the temple.

The PEACE-OFFERINGS included thank-offerings, free-will-offerings, and offerings in consequence of vows. These were usually of calves or lambs; and a freewill-offering needed not to be free from blemish. The blood was sprinkled, the fat and inwards burned, the breast and shoulder, after being lifted, and waved by the offerer, from right to left, and up and down, but always towards the altar, was kept by the priests; the rest of the sacrifice might be eaten by the offerer, under certain regulations, after having been boiled in a part of the temple used for that purpose. In the case of Eli's sons, the priests took more than the portion assigned them, and that in an overbearing violent manner, 1 Sam. ii. 13, 14. Every peace-offering was accompanied by a meat-offering of cakes of flour; a part was burned, and the rest given to the priests.

The sacrifices above described might be offered by heathens, either directly or indirectly; by the congregation of Israel at large; and by individual Israelites. Such, at least, was the practice in later times. The Jewish writers speak of the space between Jerusalem and the tower of the flock, or the tower of Edar, Micah iv. 8, as partly used for a pasture for cattle, the males of which were used for burnt-offerings, and the females for peace-offerings. This is thought to be the place where the shepherds were watching their flocks by night when the angel brought them tidings of Christ's birth, Luke ii. 8—14. Perhaps the animals they watched over were intended for the sacrifices which typified the Lamb of God, whose appearance on earth was then announced. The tower of Edar is mentioned as one of the places where Jacob fixed his abode, Gen. xxxiv. 19.

Another class of offerings included those called MEAT-OFFERINGS. Of these there were three for the whole congregation. 1. The shew-bread. 2. The sheaf of the firstfruits of barley; this was waved before the Lord: the side motion, the later Jewish rabbins said, was for restraining evil winds, the up-and-down motion for

THE MEAT-OFFERING



restraining evil dewes: thus did they add to the simple statements of the Divine law. 3. The offering of two wheaten loaves, as firstfruits, at the feast of pentecost.—The offerings for individuals were: 1. The daily offering of the high priest. 2. That offered by every priest on entering his office; these were wholly burned. 3. The offering of a small quantity of flour, by a poor man, instead of an animal, for a sin-offering. 4. The offering of barley meal, brought with a suspected wife: this and the firstfruits at the passover were the only offerings of barley. 5. An offering, Lev. ii. 13: this appears to have been a thank-offering for the bounties of Providence, and might be of dough, either unbaked or baked in an oven or a pan, also in wafers or thinner cakes. 6. The firstfruits. Oil and frankincense appear to have been required in most of these. Among the exceptions was the poor man's offering; but neither leaven nor honey was allowed in any case, see Lev. ii. 11. It has been observed, that leaven is the emblem of pride, malice, and hypocrisy; honey, of sensual pleasure. These are directly opposed to the graces and to the conduct required by the Divine law. Regular proportions of flour and the other articles were directed for the different sacrifices, and were kept always in readiness for the offerers. In our Saviour's days, the flour being mixed properly in a gold or silver dish belonging to the temple, it was put with the frankincense into the vessel of service. The priest then standing at the south-east horn of the altar, took a handful from the part moistened with oil, salted it, and laid it upon the fire with the frankincense. The rest was carried away for the priest's use.

The DRINK-OFFERING was a quantity of wine, differing according to the occasion, poured out, as the remainder of blood, at the base of the altar. This was offered with the morning and evening sacrifice, and on other occasions.

The due performance or payment of these offerings, appears to have been enforced by conscientious feelings in the minds of the pious. Bodily punishments were inflicted on the unprincipled; and the strict pharisaical observances of outward ceremonies also acted as a general stimulus in later times. They were at least to be offered

on one of the three solemn festivals, when every male Israelite was required to attend and worship before the Lord in the tabernacle or temple.

This sketch of the principal sacrifices is sufficient to explain the manner in which they were offered, and the occasions on which they were required. A more particular account will be found in the "COMMENTARY," published by the TRACT SOCIETY, at the close of the book of Leviticus.

It is evident that such observances are widely different from any services appointed under the gospel dispensation; but the directions respecting sacrifices, and the accounts of their being offered, are so minute and frequent, that we cannot be at any uncertainty as to their having been not only directed, but also offered up. And considering the immense number of sacrifices offered on some occasions, as that of the dedication of the temple by Solomon, 1 Kings viii. 62—64, and at the cleansing of the sanctuary by Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxix. 31—35, the courts of the temple would present a scene which now would appear very singular to us; and we may be thankful that a more simple way of approach to the mercy-seat is permitted to us, less repugnant to the general feelings of mankind. In later times the number of sacrifices often was very great. At one of the last passovers celebrated in Jerusalem, it is stated that 255,000 lambs were eaten, so that at least three millions of people must have been present; and we read, 2 Chron. xxxv. 7, that Josiah gave to the people no less than 30,000 kids or lambs for the passover: all these must have been without blemish. But we are not to consider according to our own ideas the scenes which the numerous sacrifices under the law would necessarily exhibit. And the following remarks from Tappan show the expediency and propriety of these institutions. "When the practice of sacrificing was first appointed, the use of letters was probably unknown; consequently, the mode of instruction by visible emblems or symbols was both indispensable and highly beneficial. For such a state of things, the offering of animal victims was made to answer for that more simple, and that rational

devotion, which words are now happily fitted to express. When we consider sacrifices, with all their attendant rites, as appointed by God, in order to assist the religious instruction, improvement, and consolation of man, we must conclude that the Most High would, in the first instance, clearly explain every part of this institution; otherwise it could not answer its proposed ends. Now, if the moral import of sacrifices were thus explained, the utility of them to mankind, in their rude and simple state, is beyond calculation. In untutored man, reason is weak, the mental feelings are heavy and rough, while sense, imagination, and passion are the leading avenues both to the understanding and heart. To man thus situated, the appointment of sacrifices is peculiarly adapted; for these convey a most pathetic and awful address to his very senses, and thus rouse him to the most serious and impressive reflections. The frequent spectacle of bleeding and smoking victims, suffering and atoning for the guilty offerers, would give them the deepest impressions of the purity, justice, and majesty of God, of the evil of transgression, of their own ill desert, and of the necessity of some adequate atonement, and of the readiness of the Deity to pardon the penitent. The numerous and diversified offerings of the ancient Jews, with the striking pomp which preceded and attended them, were fitted not only to excite and express the most reverential, humble, and grateful devotion; but also to give the best direction to the whole temper and conduct. The many washings and purifications, enjoined previous to the oblation of sacrifice, were not only physically beneficial in the eastern countries, but directly tended to impress a simple people with a scrupulous regard to inward and moral purity, especially in all their approaches to the Deity. That this was the primary intention of these ceremonies was a maxim frequently and solemnly enforced. In those early ages, the language of these well chosen emblems could not fail to be well understood and strongly felt. Above all, the frequent sacrifices of the Jewish law were intended to prefigure, and gradually to prepare men for, the great atoning sacrifice of the promised Messiah. Accordingly, our Saviour, in allusion

to those ancient oblations, is called, by way of eminence, a Sin-offering, a perfect Sacrifice for the sins of the world. In a word, the religion of the Jews and that of the Christians form one great and harmonious plan. The *Jews* saw gospel truth in its early and gradual dawn; *we* behold it in its meridian splendour. When Christ appeared, the candid and pious Jews embraced him; because they saw in him a glorious counterpart, a perfect accomplishment of their ancient rites and predictions. The Gentiles, on the other hand, were led to venerate and believe in the Hebrew law; because they beheld in it an exact, though imperfect, figure and prophecy of the gospel. What beauty and glory these observations reflect both on the Jewish and Christian dispensations! What admirable depth of wisdom do they discover in both!"

We are not able to ascertain the manner in which the Levites studied the law, so as to know the extent of their views as to the design and meaning of the sacrifices; but there are statements in the prophets, sufficient to show that the types were studied with reference to the Messiah; and it is plain that some among the Jews saw and rejoiced in the day of Christ, being led to contemplate it by the typical sacrifices and figurative language of Scripture; see Heb. xi.; John viii. 56.



## CHAPTER XI.

## THE JEWISH FESTIVALS.

THE three great annual festivals of the Jews brought to remembrance three most important national blessings: the bringing of the people out of Egypt; the giving the law; and the putting into their possession the land of promise. They are mentioned, Lev. xxiii. Each festival continued several days, and all or most of the males were required to be present at the tabernacle, being assured that their homes should not be injured during their absence on these occasions, Exod. xxxiv. 23, 24. This positive pledge and assurance is a manifest proof that the religion requiring such an observance was from God, and upheld by his almighty power and particular providence. For it does not appear that the nation ever received any injury during the attendance on these occasions, though from several passages in the historical books and Gospels, it is evident that this resort to Jerusalem was obligatory upon the people at large. The first instance of injury upon record, happened thirty years after the national rejection of Christ, when Josephus states that fifty persons were slain at Lydda, while the rest were absent attending the feast of tabernacles.

At these times the Jews, from all parts of the country, met together as brethren, and they often went up accompanied by their wives, 1 Sam. i. 3, 7, and in large companies, Luke ii. 44. Several of the psalms, it is supposed, were sung during these journeys to Jerusalem. Here is a remarkable instance of direct providential interposition, united with a right observance or use of means, for these festivals occurred at the seasons best suited for travelling, and did not interfere with the ordinary labours of the field. This attendance promoted mutual love and friendship, by persons from different parts thus often meeting together. It tended to keep up attention to the services, and may be considered as typifying the gathering of all people together to Christ, and into his church, from all parts of the



world, under the Christian dispensation. These assemblies appear to be alluded to, Heb. xii. 23.

The first of the great festivals was the PASSOVER; and it is hardly necessary to state, that it was instituted to remind the Israelites of their deliverance from Egypt. A full account of this festival is given in the book of Exodus. It was called the feast of unleavened bread, because no other bread was to be eaten during the seven days it lasted, to remind the Jews how their fathers left Egypt in haste, Deut. xvi. 3. Even now, before the passover, the Jews examine their houses very scrupulously, to be sure that not a crumb of leavened bread remains within their walls. It used to be customary, and perhaps may be so still, to leave a few crumbs in a corner, which, when found, were cast out of the house with some ceremony; thus the minds of the young children were impressed by the peculiar observance required. Perhaps this has succeeded to the custom of encouraging the children to ask the meaning of the sprinkling of the blood on the lintel and posts of the houses, Exod. xii. 26, 27. It has been already remarked, that leaven is spoken of as an emblem of malice, hypocrisy, and sensuality; see 1 Cor. v. 7, 8, Let us ask ourselves, Are we as anxious to cast out every crumb of this spiritual leaven? Let none be careless in this necessary duty.

The passover was very strictly observed. The number of persons who resorted to Jerusalem, at this time, was very great; see page 97. The inhabitants gave free use of their rooms to the strangers. An instance of this we have in the case of our Saviour, Mark xiv. 13, 14, and many might be accommodated in temporary erections. The rabbins assert that none ever said on this occasion, "I have not found a bed in Jerusalem to lie on." The beds in the east are merely small mattresses, little better than a piece of cloth.

In later times, several observances were added to the passover, beyond the simple observances directed in Exod. xii. The manner of celebrating it when our Lord was on earth appears to have been as follows, though it is not certain that all the ceremonials were observed.

1. The males of the family or company, consisting of not less than ten, and sometimes twenty, met together in the evening, when they washed their hands and feet, and placed themselves at table in the reclining posture then customary. In earlier times they ate the passover standing, with their staves in their hands, as about to begin a journey, *Exod. xii. 11*; but latterly they reclined at this, as at other meals, to indicate that they had been brought into the promised land of their rest. A cup of wine, mixed with water, was presented to each guest, over which a blessing was pronounced, "Blessed be He that created the fruit of the vine!" The lamb, some unleavened bread, and bitter herbs, were then placed on the table as appointed by the law, also other articles of food. The principal person distributed pieces of the paschal lamb, with unleavened bread, until all the lamb was eaten. The paschal lambs had been killed in the temple, with observances instituted for the occasion, and then being taken to the respective houses, were roasted on spits made of pomegranate wood. Every person present was bound to eat to the size of an olive at least. 2. After this first repast they again washed their feet, and replaced themselves at table, to eat the second course or repast, consisting of bitter herbs, with a kind of sauce made of bruised palm branches, and berries or raisins, mixed with vinegar. This sauce was thick; it was called "haroseth," and was considered to represent the tempered clay from which their forefathers made bricks during their bondage in Egypt. Another cup of wine was taken. The master divided the bread into two parts, and laying one part aside, covered with a napkin, he then blessed the other and distributed it, saying, "Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, the King of the whole world, in the eating of unleavened bread." 3. He next took the reserved part from the napkin, and divided it into as many portions as there were guests. At that time, or as some think, at an earlier period, one of the youngest of the company asked the meaning of this rite, *Exod. xii. 26*, "And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? Then ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of

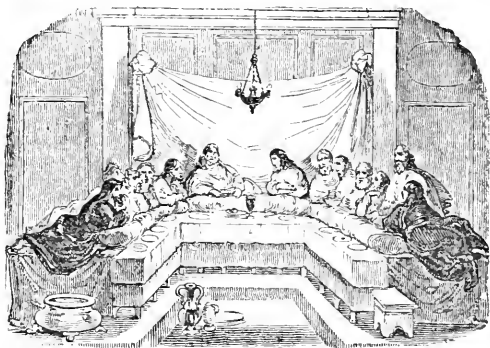
the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses." The master answered by repeating the hagadah or showing forth. "This is the bread of affliction, which our fathers ate in the land of affliction. Let him that is hungry come and eat the passover; let him that hath need come and eat the passover; for this passover is our Saviour and our refuge." Or, he explained the symbolical meaning of the different dishes and observances, expounding from Deut. xxvi. 5, "A Syrian ready to perish was my father," etc. Then taking the cup, he first tasted it himself, and presented it to each, saying, "Blessed be thou, O Lord, our God, King of the world, who hast created the fruit of the vine!" This third cup was usually called the cup of blessing. The apostle refers to it, 1 Cor. x. 16, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" See also Psal. cxvi. 13. 4. The whole ended with taking a fourth cup of wine, and singing the 113th and five following psalms of praise and thanksgiving, of which the 118th, the last, is peculiarly significant of the coming of Christ. These were called the great Hallel, or Hallelujah.

The preceding particulars throw considerable light on the concise accounts of the evangelists. The events of the passover and last supper, as blended together, may be considered to have occurred as follows.

When the paschal lamb was dressed, and all things were ready, Jesus reclined at table with the twelve, and according to Luke xxii. 15, he expressed that he had earnestly desired to eat this passover with them before he suffered. Taking a cup of wine, he blessed it, and told them to divide it among themselves. When the paschal supper, or what is called the first course, was ended, Jesus rose from table, and to set them an example of humility, washed their feet himself; he also exhorted them against seeking who should be the greatest. Our Lord then alluded to the traitor Judas, John xiii. 11, gave them the encouragement of a future glorious reward, Luke xxii. 28—30,

and cautioned them all, especially warning Peter that Satan had desired to sift him.

Having replaced themselves at table to eat the second course, Christ testified more plainly than before, that one of them should betray him, and said that it was he who



dipped his hand in the dish with him. Judas asking, as well as the rest, "Is it I?" Jesus answered that it was, but unheard by the rest. Then John, instigated by Peter, inquired who was meant, and our Lord told the beloved disciple, who reclined next him, that it was the person to whom he should give a sop. After dipping the sop in the haroseth, or sauce, he gave it to Judas, who, finding himself detected, hastened from the place to put his treachery into execution.

Our Lord then took the bread which had been reserved, and blessed, and broke, and gave to the eleven disciples. Likewise he took the cup, and told them, "Drink ye all of it," Matt. xxvi. 27, showing by the words with which he accompanied these actions, that he instituted a solemn memorial of the sacrifice of his death. He concluded the whole by singing with his disciples a hymn, or the psalms already mentioned. Some principal commentators consider that the bread was distributed before Judas left the

table, but they generally agree that he went out before the cup was given. That cup our Lord spoke of as typifying his blood, the blood of the new covenant—the grand plan of agreement or reconciliation God was establishing between himself and mankind, by the passion, that is, the suffering and death of his Son, through whom alone men can draw nigh to God.

Learned men who have closely examined the subject, have shown that the observances of the Jewish passover were directly opposed to several ceremonies common among heathen in their idolatrous feasts. And we must not pass on without observing, that the passover had an especial typical reference to Christ in the circumstances attending it. It was, 1. Descriptive of his person; 2. Of his sufferings and death; 3. Of the fruits of these sufferings—deliverance and freedom; and, 4. Of the manner in which believers are made partakers of the blessed fruits of the sacrifice of Christ; as it is by the precious blood of Christ shed for our sins, and by that alone, that sinful man is delivered from the wrath which his sins justly deserve. This subject the reader will find discussed in works which treat upon the types, and in commentaries on the Bible.

During the passover, the sheaf of the firstfruits of the barley harvest was offered with a particular sacrifice, as directed, Lev. xxiii. 9—14. On the anniversary of this day our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead; the apostle Paul may have had this specially in view when speaking of Christ's resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 20, "He is become the firstfruits of them that slept."

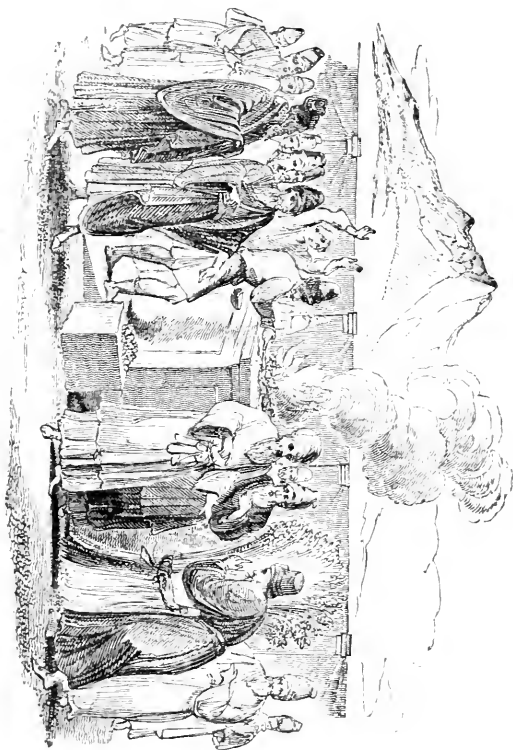
The second great festival was the feast of Pentecost, a Greek word, from the feast being kept on the fiftieth day after the first day of unleavened bread. In the Bible it is called by several names. The feast of weeks, Exod. xxxiv. 22; Dent. xvi. 10—17; the feast of harvest, Exod. xxiii. 16, the day of firstfruits, Numb. xxviii. 26. It was celebrated during the seventh week, or a week of weeks after the first day of the passover, and because on this day the firstfruits of the wheat harvest were presented with thanksgivings to God for his bounties: see Exod. xxiii. 16; Lev. xxiii. 15—21; Numb. xxviii. 26—31.

On this day also the giving the law from Mount Sinai was commemorated. The number of Jews who attended at the festival was very great; see Acts ii. The reader will recollect that it was at this season the Holy Spirit came miraculously upon the apostles and the firstfruits of the Christian church.

On this occasion the people went up to Jerusalem in solemn processions, carrying their offerings of firstfruits; many of them in baskets richly wrought, and ornamented with flowers, which were solemnly presented in the temple. The sacrifices at this festival were numerous, but we need not go minutely into the particulars. In Dent. xxvi. 5—10, is a beautiful form of thanksgiving to be used in presenting the firstfruits, which reminded the Jews of their origin from “a Syrian ready to perish,” and recapitulated the Lord’s merciful dealings towards them.

The feast of tabernacles continued for a week. It was to keep in the memory of the Israelites their dwelling in booths or tents in the desert, consequently of the days of their pilgrimage there; and thus it was an emblem of the transitory nature of man’s abode upon earth, Lev. xxiii. 34—43. It is also called the feast of ingatherings, Exod. xxiii. 16. At this time was the vintage, and the gathering of fruits. The sacrifices for this occasion are directed, Numb. xxix. They were numerous, but diminished each day the festival lasted. In the whole, seventy bullocks, fourteen rams, seven goats, and ninety-eight lambs were offered during the seven days. During this week the people were to dwell in tents, or in arbours of branches of trees, (see page 109,) which latterly were made upon the flat roofs of their houses. They carried branches of palm and of other trees, singing, “Hosanna,” that is, “Save I beseech thee,” Lev. xxiii. 40; Neh. viii. 15. This festival was celebrated with especial rejoicings. But the most remarkable of the later ceremonies was the pouring out water upon the altar. A golden picher was filled at the pool of Siloam, and brought into the temple, through the water-gate, with much ceremony. The water was then mixed with wine, and poured upon the sacrifice as it laid upon the altar. It seems to have been adopted as an emblem of future

THE OFFERING OF THE FIRSTFRUITS.



blessings, perhaps in allusion to Isa. xii. 3. It might have reference to the water that flowed from the rock in the wilderness, and to the blessing of future rains solicited on this occasion; but the devout Jews also considered water emblematical of the Holy Spirit, and in their writings, referring to this custom, say, "Why is it called the place of drawing? Because from thence ye draw the Holy Spirit; as it is written, And ye shall draw water with joy from the fountains of salvation." The rejoicing on this occasion was such as to cause a saying, "He that never saw the rejoicing of the drawing of water, never saw rejoicing in all his life." Upon this day they read the last section of the law, and also began the first, lest they should appear more glad to end these readings than willing to begin them. It was upon this day, the last, or the great day of the feast, that our blessed Lord stood forth in the temple, and spake with a loud voice the animated and very expressive declaration, implying that the Holy Spirit should be his gift, John vii. 37, 38, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly" (or rather from his heart,) "shall flow rivers of living water."

The people attended the sacrifices, heard the traditions expounded, and listened to the vocal and instrumental music of the psalmody, even the gravest among the men leaped and danced in the temple courts. The rabbins say this custom was founded on the act of David, 2 Sam. vi. 14; but his movements in the procession which accompanied the ark, must have widely differed from the indecorous display of the Jews in later days. These rejoicings were continued to a late hour, and the court of the women was splendidly lighted up. Each person had a *luleb*, formed of some branches of willow, bound up with pieces of palm and myrtle, and carried a pome-citron, or fruit of the citron tree, somewhat resembling a large orange, in his hand. The *lulebs* were carried home to their houses, and brought again on the day following. Maimonides considers that these branches were intended as a sign of joy on account of the deliverance of the Israelites from the desert, a place destitute of fruits and seed.



BOOTHS AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.



Two other festivals were directed in the law, although the celebration required was not so general as upon the occasions already mentioned. The first was the feast of trumpets, so called from the trumpets being blown with more than usual solemnity; and it may be considered as typical or emblematical of the publishing the gospel, Numb. xxix. 1—6; Lev. xxiii. 24, 25. The other was the feast, or rather the fast of expiation; the great day of atonement, on which day the people were forbidden to eat food. Maimonides speaks of it as a day wholly devoted to repentance and Divine worship, to be entirely spent in confessing and forsaking sin. The sacrifice on this day was more solemn than any other. It was offered by the high priest alone, for the sins of the whole nation during the preceding year. The law respecting it is given, Lev. xvi., which chapter the reader should now peruse. We will describe the proceedings of this day as observed in the later times of the Jews. The high priest left his house and family seven days before, and lived in a chamber in the court of Israel: a substitute also was appointed, lest any thing should occur to render him unable to discharge the duties of this great day. Twice during this interval he was sprinkled with water in which ashes of the red heifer had been steeped, lest he might unknowingly have been defiled by some dead body. During this interval he practised the duties he would have to perform on that day, and studied the directions for the services. He was solemnly adjured not to alter any thing as to burning the incense; a high priest, of the sect of the Sadducees, having once ventured to light it before he went within the veil. On the day before the solemnity took place, he might eat plentifully, to prepare himself to support the ensuing fast, but he must not sleep during the night. He either read and expounded the Scriptures, or listened to others; the parts usually selected were Chronicles, Ezra, Job, or Daniel. Upon this day, according to the later Jews, the high priest was permitted to pronounce the word **JEHOVAH**, the peculiar name of God, which they did not allow any one to pronounce except the high priest, and him only on this day.

We now come to the duties of the high priest on the great day of atonement. Early in the morning he bathed, and arrayed himself in the rich garments of his office; then, proceeding to the court, he washed his hands and feet at the laver. During this day he bathed his whole body five times, and washed his hands and feet ten times. He then killed the morning sacrifice, laid the pieces on the fire, trimmed the lamps in the holy place, offered the incense, and blessed the people from the steps of the porch. The usual morning service being concluded, he proceeded to offer the sacrifices peculiar to the day—a bullock, a ram, and seven lambs for a burnt-offering, with meat-offerings, and a kid for a sin-offering. He then washed his hands and feet at the laver.

As it was a fast day, the people did not return home, but the public services were continued without intermission. The high priest again bathed his whole body, and put on the white linen dress usually worn by priests, thus showing that when he appeared as a sinner, to expiate his own sins and the sins of the people, he was to be arrayed in a humble dress, and that there is no distinction of persons before God; also that he then acted, not in his peculiar character of high priest, but as the representative of the congregation. Having again washed at the laver, he proceeded to the north side of the altar, where he found more animals ready to be sacrificed. The first were the sin-offerings: the bullock for his own sins and those of the priests, and the two kids of the goats for the congregation. Placing his hand upon the head of the bullock, he turned towards the holy place, and prayed as follows: "O Lord, I have sinned, done perversely, and transgressed before thee, I and my house. I beseech thee, O Lord, expiate the sins, perversities, and transgressions whereby I have sinned, done perversely, and transgressed, I and my house, as it is written in the law of Moses thy servant, saying, For on this day he will expiate for you, to purge you from all your sins before the Lord, that ye may be clean." The attending ministers added, "Blessed be the glorious name of his kingdom for ever and ever."

The high priest then went to the north-east corner, and the kids were placed one on his right and the other on his left hand. Two pieces of gold, one inscribed "For the Lord," the other "For Azazel," were put into a box, the high priest drew forth one with each hand, and the goat on the hand in which was the lot for Azazel became the scape goat, and a scarlet list was tied on his forehead. The Jewish tradition is, that this cloth frequently became white when tied on the goat, but that it never changed during the last forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem; it is noticed by some with a reference to the manner in which the Jews, about that period, imprecated the blood of Christ to be on themselves and on their children, Matt. xxvii. 25. The other goat was then taken to the rings. The high priest having repeated his confession, killed the bullock, and gave a vessel with some of the blood to a priest, who carried it to the top of the steps of the porch, stirring the blood to prevent its congealing.

The high priest next took from the altar a censer of coals, and ascended the steps of the porch, carrying also a plate with incense, while the people anxiously prayed for him. He crossed the porch and the holy place, and opening the veils, entered the holy of holies. This day was the only time during the year when that sacred place was entered by any one. Standing before the ark, the high priest placed the censer on the floor, and with his hands put the incense upon the fire. When the place was filled with smoke, he retired backwards till he was without the veil, uttering a short, but lifeless formulary for national prosperity. He then fetched the blood, and sprinkled it eight times before the ark, and leaving the burning censer, retired to the holy place, where he set down the rest of the blood, and proceeded to the court of the priests. He then sacrificed the goat, and sprinkled the blood in the same manner. During this time no person was allowed to come beyond the altar. The typical nature of the services of this day will be noticed presently; but we may here remark from Outram, that as the high priest thus carried the blood, which is the vehicle of the life or sensitive soul of the victims, into the innermost

sanctuary, and sprinkled it towards the mercy-seat, so our High Priest in the heaven itself, which that sanctuary prefigured, presents not only the soul, but the body of the victim that was slain for our sins. Christ has appeared in the character of the High Priest, as well as in that of the offering.

The next process was to make atonement for the holy place, by sprinkling the blood of the bullock and the goat, first separately, and then mixed together, before the veil and upon the altar of incense. Then, crossing the court of the priests, he made atonement for that place, by pouring out the rest of the blood at the south-west corner. The great altar was not sprinkled like that of incense; perhaps from being considered to be so holy as to sanctify every offering laid upon it, see *Exod. xxix. 37*; *Matt. xxiii. 19*; it was not thought to need any purification.

The time now came for sending away the scape goat, as a type of Him who bare away our infirmities, and carried off our diseases. The high priest proceeded to the part of the place where the goat stood, and, with the stationary men, confessed over it the sins of the people, placing their hands upon its head. It was then given to a person who, accompanied by others, led it forth to a high and steep rock, about twelve miles from Jerusalem. Ten booths were erected on the road thither, at equal distances, and in each of them persons were placed. The man in charge of the goat was delivered over to each company in succession, meat and drink being offered to him at each station. The company from the last booth stopped at a distance from the rock, while the man who led the goat unbound the scarlet cloth, and tore it in two, replacing one half between the horns of the animal, and fixing the other piece to the rock; then pushing the goat backwards, to prevent its leaping, he tumbled the animal over the rock, and it was dashed to pieces by the fall. The person appointed to discharge this duty returned to the nearest booth, and remained there till the evening, when he bathed, and washed his clothes, and went back to the city. Maimonides thus speaks of this ceremonial: "The scape goat expiates all the sins mentioned in the

law, whether light or heavy, whether committed through contumacy or error, whether done ignorantly or knowingly. Every one who repents, is thus atoned for by the



scape goat; but if any one do not repent, then only his lighter transgressions are expiated by the scape goat." Reader, let us learn to look to Him who was typified by the scape goat.

Meanwhile the priest disposed of the carcasses of the sin-offerings; only the fat was burned upon the altar, the rest being burned without the city, as directed Lev. viii. 17, by some of the priests, who also bathed and washed their clothes before their return.

At the time when they supposed that the man with the

scape goat had gone three miles from Jerusalem, the high priest entered a pulpit in the court of the women, and read Lev. xvi. and xxiii. 27—32, the passages in the law concerning this solemnity. He also repeated eight short prayers. Then, returning to the inner court, he washed his hands and feet at the laver, went again to a chamber on the north side, where he bathed and put on his rich garments, and again washed his hands and feet at the laver; this being required of every priest each time he quitted the court and re-entered it. He then offered two rams for a burnt-offering.

By this time the hour for the evening service had arrived, and when it was offered, the high priest again washed and bathed, and putting on his plain garments, washed and went into the holy of holies a fourth time, to bring away the censer and incense plate. His being said to enter once, has reference to his entering only one day in the year. He again washed, bathed, put on his rich garments, washed, and went into the holy place to offer the evening incense and trim the lamps. Then washing for the last time, the high priest laid aside his rich apparel and retired to his own house, accompanied by the multitude, who rejoiced that God had not mingled his blood with that of the sacrifices.

Thus ended this solemn ceremonial, and there is much in it that deserves serious attention. It was a day of fasting for national humiliation, and surely other nations ought to copy the example stately, and humble themselves before the Lord. The scape goat, figuratively bearing away the iniquities of the people, reminds of the Saviour, who bare the sins and sorrows of his people, as the burnt-offerings remind of Christ's sufferings; while the high priest's offering for himself as well as others, reminds that all mankind have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. But the solemn entrance of the high priest into the most holy place, was especially to represent Jesus, the Great High Priest of our profession who, when, by the one offering up of himself, he had made expiation for sin, entered into heaven itself, with his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for all his people, there to appear in

the presence of God for them, and to make continual intercession for them. The apostle, Heb. ix. x., declares how much the intercession of Christ was superior to that of any mere man; also that sacrifices of bullocks and goats were only of avail to take away ceremonial pollution, for it was not possible these should atone for sin. Hence the apostle, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, concludes, "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge" the believer's "conscience from dead works," (deeds deserving of death,) "to serve the living God." Here again remark, with Outram, the manner in which Christ united in his own person the various parts of this typical service—as Offerer, as Victim, and as High Priest. He offered himself willingly on our behalf, both as offerer and offering; he was the victim slain; and he was both the High Priest and the slain victim, when he entered the heavenly sanctuary where he now pleads for us.

After the captivity, the Jews instituted other fast and feast days, in addition to those prescribed by the law. The two principal were the feast of purim and that of the dedication. The feast of purim, or lots, was to commemorate the deliverance of the Jews from the plot of Haman, for their extirpation, as recorded in the book of Esther. One day was kept as a fast, in reference to the day on which the Jews were to have been destroyed, the two following as feasts for their deliverance. This is still observed, but in a manner which brings it under the account of the modern Jews; there are no particulars as to the manner in which it was celebrated in the temple.

The feast of dedication was appointed by Judas Maccabeus, as a new consecration of the temple, after it had been polluted by Antiochus Epiphanes, who destroyed the books of the law, plundered the temple, and even erected an altar on the top of the great altar, where he caused a sow to be sacrificed, and sprinkled the courts and temple with broth of swine's flesh, thus rendering



them as defiled as it was possible to do in the view of the Jewish people. This defiled altar was taken down by the Maccabees, and the stones laid up in a chamber at the north-west part of the court of Israel. A new one was built, and the hallowed furniture again supplied. The rededication then took place, B. C. 170. The festival continued eight days; but the chief distinctive observances, were singing the hallel, or Psalms 113 to 118 on the first day, with a general illumination for eight successive nights. The rabbins connected with it a story of a miraculous increase of the temple oil after Antiochus had been overcome. This festival is noticed, John x. 22, from whence we learn that our Lord sanctioned it by his presence, and that it took place in the winter.

The festival of the sabbatical year will claim attention elsewhere, in connexion with the observance of the sabbath day; and the feasts connected with the new moons, and the beginning of the year, come under our view when noticing the spiritual worship of the Jews.

The Jewish festivals all had a directly religious origin, and were all connected with religious observances; nor did this religious aspect tend to render them less satisfactory and less conducive to the enjoyment of the people. Well would it be if we were not so apt to lose sight of the religious origin of our principal festivals; but when we consider the usual way of keeping Christmas and Easter, and the scenes of profligacy which occur in many country places at the wakes, which were originally feasts of dedication of the various churches, it must be admitted that we rather have respect to the heathen rites, and the ceremonies with which heathen festivals were kept, than to the Christian principles we profess, or even to the **examples in the Jewish ritual**.

## CHAPTER XII.

## MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVANCES.

THE USE OF SALT—CIRCUMCISION—LAWS AGAINST  
NECROMANCY—THE RED HEIFER—CLEANSING THE  
LEPER.

IN Levit. ii. 13, we read an injunction expressed thus:—"With all thy offerings thou shalt offer salt." Salt was considered as an emblem of friendship and faithfulness, and was used in their sacrifices, and in their covenants which were confirmed by sacrifices, as a token of confirmation: see Lev. ii. 13; Numb. xviii. 19; 2 Chron. xiii. 5. In the latter passage, Abijah speaks of the covenant or promise, sent to David by the prophet Nathan, as an assurance by a covenant of salt. In the figurative language of Scripture, salt denotes that incorruption of mind, and sincerity of grace, which is necessary in all who would present an acceptable offering to God, as well as hold communion with him in the exercises of worship. Large quantities of salt were used in the temple with the sacrifices; it was chiefly rock or earth salt, which abounds in several places in the neighbourhood of Judea, and nothing can be more solitary or desolate than these districts; even birds and beasts seem affrighted at the scene. The sentence denounced against idolatrous Judah, Jer. xvii. 6, was, that her land should be as desolate as one of these dreary wastes. This salt loses its savour by exposure to the air, it was then scattered over the marble pavement of the temple, to render it less slippery in wet weather. Our Saviour is supposed to refer thereto, Matt. v. 13; and his words present an affecting caution as well as an encouragement to every professing Christian. "Ye are the salt of the earth," preserving it from being destroyed through the corruptions of the wicked, but justly cast forth as worthless refuse, if that great object is not duly attended to by you. With respect to the confirmation of covenants, if an Arab gives a traveller salt, he may be as-

sured of his protection. It is related of an Arab robber, that having broken into a palace, he was about to depart with a considerable booty, when he kicked something with his foot in the dark, on putting it to his mouth he found it was a lump of salt. Considering that he had, though unconsciously, partaken of the salt of the owner of the property, he laid down the articles he had collected, and hastened from the spot.

The Jews, in Scripture, are frequently called the eircumcision, in allusion to their being the chosen people of God, the descendants of Abraham, and taken into covenant with Jehovah: see Gen. xvii. 4—8, “Thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

Circumcision was ordained as a token of this covenant, and Abraham and his descendants were to be circumcised, as a token of their partaking its benefits, and that the remembrance of it might not be forgotten. But the freeness of the grace of justification, which was promised to Abraham and all his spiritual seed by this covenant, preceded the institution of the rite of circumcision. This point is strongly pressed by St. Paul, in Rom. iv. The apostle also shows the spiritual or mystical intent of this ordinance, by teaching that as he is not a Jew who is only one outwardly, so neither is that (the true) circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but “he is a Jew,” or true Israelite, “who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God,” Rom. ii. 28, 29; see Col. ii. 11.

The Jews, when inclined to boast of their privileges, often called themselves "the circumcision," and spoke of the Gentiles with contempt as the uncircumcised. It was the sign or mark of their profession as worshippers of the true God; and no Jew, without this, could be admitted to partake of the passover, *Exod. xii. 48*; thus it was enforced as an observance of the Levitical dispensation; and thus Christ ascribes the institution of circumcision to Moses, though it was derived from the patriarchs, *John vii. 22*. As it was a rite none were likely to choose but from a principle of religious faith and obedience, so it was suited to teach the obligations of a holy nation, to seek for purity of heart and holiness of life.

A proselyte of the covenant, was a stranger, who renounced idolatry, and had been circumcised, and thereby was pledged to keep the whole of the ceremonial as well as the moral law. These were called proselytes of righteousness. A proselyte of the gate, was a stranger who sojourned among the Jews, "the stranger that is within thy gates," *Deut. xiv. 21*. He worshipped Jehovah as the only true God, and received the moral law; but he was not circumcised, nor engaged to the ritual and ceremonial observances. Of this description probably were "the devout men who feared God," frequently mentioned in the New Testament, particularly Cornelius, *Acts x. 1*. They were bound to the observance of the sabbath.

The rite of circumcision was to be performed when the child was eight days old, even though that day might fall upon the sabbath, *John vii. 22*; and it is considered that it was then customary to name the child: see respecting John the Baptist and Jesus, *Luke i. 59*; *ii. 21*; where we read how Simeon took the child Jesus in his arms and blessed him. At the institution of this rite Abram's name was changed to Abraham.

In later times the Jews introduced superstitious and unnecessary observances into this as well as other rites. One was to leave a seat empty for the prophet Elijah, who was supposed to be present, though not visible. The whole observance became unnecessary, and a matter of indifference, when the ceremonial law was done away by the

coming of Christ, and the Christian dispensation was set forth. There are frequent references to this in the writings of the apostles, for many Jewish Christians were still attached to their old rites, and endeavoured to enforce the observance of them, especially circumcision, which was the first, and as it were the bond or pledge to all the rest; but the apostles, particularly St. Paul, earnestly contended against the observance of this rite by the Gentiles; knowing, that if liberty was permitted in this respect, their Christian liberty as to all ceremonial observances could no longer be opposed. The question was solemnly considered by the apostles and the rest of the church at Jerusalem, as is recorded Acts xv. when the assembly followed the view taken by the apostle James, that the observance of this rite was not to be required from Gentile converts. Then the preachers of the gospel seem to have gone forth with renewed activity and success. Yet, while the temple stood, many Christians who were of Jewish extraction, seem to have considered it requisite that they and their children should observe the ordinances of the ceremonial law. St. Paul caused Timothy to be circumcised, his mother being a Jewess, Acts xvi. 1—3; and the apostle himself declared before Festus that he had not done any thing contrary to the law of the Jews. An attempt to confirm this point, that he “walked orderly and kept the law,” in which perhaps there was some departure from Christian simplicity, gave rise to the tumultuous scenes that ended in the apostle being sent to Rome as a prisoner; see Acts xxi. We shall find it best always to act with simplicity as well as with truth, and not even in appearance to lay stress upon things which in our hearts we believe are indifferent.

It is plain also that Moses, from the first promulgation of the law, directed the attention of the Jews to the spiritual import of this rite; see Dent. x. 16; xxx. 6. The latter verse, is a promise, as follows, “And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.” It indicated the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, Col. ii. 11;

and the prophets frequently reproached the disobedient Jews as uncircumcised in heart. Quarles, in his *Emblems*, called "The School of the Heart," represents a heart decked out with all sorts of follies and vanities which are about to be cut off, and represents Christ as saying to the soul,

Consider then my cross, my nails, and spear,  
 And let that thought  
 Cut razor-like thine heart, when thou dost hear  
 How dear I bought  
 Thy freedom from the power of sin,  
 And that distress which thou wast in.

At the admission of full proselytes, who were called proselytes of righteousness, circumcision, baptism, and the offering of sacrifices were customary. The two latter were required of women as well as men. The baptisms or washings were accompanied with some ceremonies, and are supposed to be alluded to by the apostle Paul, Heb. vi. 2, and elsewhere. A proselyte was required: 1. To come willingly; neither force nor fraud might be employed. 2. Perfectly to renounce errors and idolatry, and entirely to separate from former friends: the Jews called proselytism a new birth, and our Lord showed that men must be born again, not only of water, but of the Holy Ghost, John iii. 5. 3. Submission to the law given by Moses. 4. An engagement to continue faithful to death.

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Another point respecting the ritual or ceremonial law, noticed by Lowman, must here be briefly adverted to. The ritual law clearly denotes the belief in the immortality of the soul, and the separate existence of departed spirits, as the general belief of the whole nation. This is also expressed by the laws against consulting the dead; but especially by the strict enactments against the idolatrous customs of their neighbours, either in regarding the souls of dead men as demigods, or in worshipping demons as the guardians of mortal men. Not only are there direct laws against these observances, but the whole of the Jewish rites evidently are framed so as positively to exclude any such doctrines. Nothing is more expressly set forth,

than that no attention must be paid to any belief in a class of inferior deities, wherewith heathen worship abounds. This is strongly implied in the regulations which precluded all undue respect to the dead; see Lev. xix. 28. The excess to which funeral honours were carried among the heathen, by an easy transition led to deifying the objects of this respect; and the very same feeling led to the canonizing of dead men, and the worship of saints, in the church of Rome, and in the Greek church.

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Among the ritual observances of the Jewish law was the consecration of the ashes of the red heifer, and the use made of them by mixing them with water, to be employed for the ceremonial purifications, by sprinkling the unclean. This is of the more importance, as the rit. certainly had direct reference to Christ and things done under the gospel. It has been well remarked, that the water used for purifying, owed even its typical qualities to the ashes of the heifer mixed with it. St. Paul makes a distinct allusion to it in the epistle to the Hebrews, chap. ix. 13, 14: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works" (sinful deeds) "to serve the living God!" In Numbers xix. the reader will find a full account of this ritual observance, and the various purposes for which the ashes were to be used. To these ceremonials the later Jews made very considerable additions. Many rules were appointed for guidance in selecting the heifer, which was shut up seven days before the sacrifice. The priest appointed to officiate was prepared by a variety of ceremonials, and the animal was sacrificed on the side of the valley of Kedron, towards the Mount of Olives. The heifer being killed and burned, the ashes were gathered up with great care, pounded, and sifted. One-third was laid up in a place on the mountain for the sprinkling the people, one-third delivered to the twenty-four courses of priests for their purifications, and the remainder kept in a chamber of the

temple. The lengths to which the later Jews carried their superstitious observances, in using these ashes, are too absurd to be mentioned.

According to Jewish traditions, nine red heifers have been sacrificed: one by Eleazer, the son of Aaron; one by Ezra; seven others between the captivity and the destruction of the temple by the Romans; and they expect that a tenth will be burned in the days of their Messiah. That seven should have been required during the last 500 years, and only two during the preceding period of 1,000, shows how the ceremonial observances were multiplied. The sacrifice of this heifer was typical of the death of Christ; but learned men point out several circumstances, by which this sacrifice and its ceremonials poured contempt on some heathen usages, especially by the sacrifice of an animal held sacred by the Egyptians. And by confining the use of consecrated water to one case, that of defilement by a dead body, the use of similar lustrations by consecrated water on other occasions was checked. In the other cases of general occurrence, the water used for purification was selected without any ceremonial observances; but still they expressed a due honour to the presence of Jehovah, constantly representing how needful it was for those honoured by a near approach to the Divine Presence, to keep themselves pure, and cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, that they might honourably serve a God so holy and so pure.

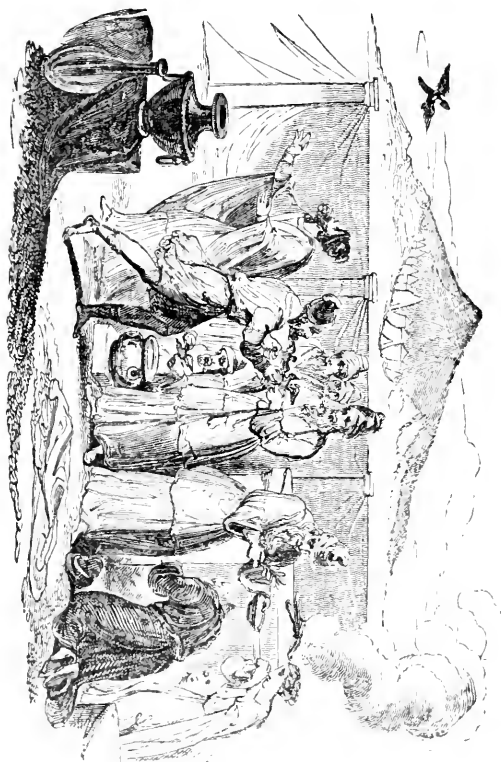
In other regulations the customs of the heathens are directly opposed, and sometimes expressly forbidden, as by the injunction not to seethe a kid in its mother's milk, *Exod. xxiii. 19*, which was practised among the heathen as a magical rite. They sprinkled the milk in their fields and gardens, believing it would ensure fruitfulness in the following year. Also in the distinctions as to clean and unclean meats, *Lev. xi.*, and by directing sacrifices of animals which were accounted sacred by the heathen.

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One more ceremonial must be noticed. The rites for cleansing a leper are stated *Lev. xiv.* in very clear and express terms. It is to be observed, that the cleansing of



THE LEPER PRONOUNCED CLEAN



the leper was not in any manner supposed to be caused by the observance of any rites of the law, or by any proceedings of the priests. All they had to do was to examine the leper, and pronounce when he was cleansed. The priest was to examine the leper some days before he was allowed to enter the court of the tabernacle, to offer the sacrifices commanded by the law for his cleansing. The same course was pursued in the temple, where a place was set apart for the leper till the time for the offering of his sacrifice arrived. Although pronounced clean by the priest where he dwelt, and inspected on his arrival at the temple, yet it is to be observed, that he was not allowed to enter the court of Israel till his sacrifices had been offered. He stood in the gate Nicanor, stretching forwards towards the inner court, but might not proceed farther till his sacrifices were slain, and the priest had put some of the blood of the victim upon his left ear. How lively this representation of the efficacy of the atoning blood of Christ! We must not pass by the ceremonial peculiar to this rite, of the two birds being brought, one of which was killed, and the other let loose. This circumstance is depicted in the engraving on page 125; and is beautifully alluded to by Cowper, in his well-known hymn, entitled, "Old Testament Gospel," which fully sets forth the gospel meaning of the sacrifices.

Israel, in ancient days,  
Not only had a view  
Of Sinai in a blaze,  
But learn'd the gospel too;  
The types and figures were a glass,  
In which they saw a Saviour's face.

Dipt in his fellow's blood,  
The living bird went free;  
The type well understood,  
Express'd the sinner's plea:  
Describ'd a guilty soul enlarg'd,  
And by a Saviour's death discharg'd.

Jesus, I love to trace  
Throughout the sacred page,  
The footsteps of thy grace,  
The same in ev'ry age:  
O grant that I may faithful be  
To clearer light vouchsafed to me!

Before we pass from this division of our subject, it may be well to notice the able arguments by which Lowman and Graves have clearly shown that the Jewish ritual, as a system, was not so burdensome as many suppose. It is true, that there were many ceremonial observances, but these in their simple and original form were all found calculated to promote the temporal interests and welfare of the Nation; therefore the adversary tempted them before the captivity to break these, and to refuse compliance with the Divine precepts; and after the captivity, to render the kind restrictions a heavy yoke, by adding their own traditions. The sacrifices, when offered by individuals as sin-offerings, were light compared with the penalties which might have been enforced. And as a national ritual, through at times complicated, and to our ideas unpleasing, the sacrifices could not be regarded as expensive. The stated offerings at the temple during the year have been estimated as follows, 115 bullocks, 38 rams, 31 kids, 1,103 lambs, 600 bushels of fine flour, 500 gallons of oil, and 400 gallons of wine. The whole yearly expense of this national ritual service, Lowman observes, would not cost £100 for each of the twelve tribes. Still the personal attendance, the occasional sacrifices and lustrations, rendered it burdensome to individuals, when compared with the Christian dispensation; see Acts xv. 10.

We have now gone through the ritual ceremonies of the Jewish law, founded upon or connected with sacrificial observances; and we may hope that the reader is satisfied that the true intent and spirit of the whole Mosaic law, and of every ceremony directed by Divine authority, was, as Lowman expresses, to teach and exhort the Hebrews, as a holy nation, to serve God in purity of heart, in real holiness, in conformity to the will and to the perfections of the holy God himself. The ritual of the Hebrews had a body of moral laws as well as ceremonial institutions appointed in it, while it was a shadow of the good things to come with the promised Messiah. The moral law still remains enforced by the precepts of the New Testament, but all the ceremonies have passed away; we now live under a new covenant, according to which Christ was once offered to

bear the sins of many, Heb. ix. 28. Read also Heb. viii. 8—13. Under this, the principles of holiness and the privilege and duty of spiritual worship are still inculcated, as they were from the days of Adam to those of John the Baptist, while we are no longer placed under the burdensome system of rites and ceremonies, which the apostle Peter characterised as a yoke which neither the Jews of his day nor their fathers were able to bear. Let us then rejoice, that there is not any such restrictive or burdensome system enacted in the New Testament, as a matter for general observance. But let us not forget the words of our Lord to the woman of Samaria, John iv. 23, 24, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." The salvation of Israel has long since appeared from Zion, abrogating all the ancient ceremonies; and God has revealed himself in a spiritual way, to such as have waited for the consolation of Israel as revealed in Christ Jesus.

Finish'd all the types and shadows  
Of the ceremonial law,  
Finish'd what our God had promised;  
Death and hell no more need awe.  
"It is finish'd!" Saints from hence your comforts draw.



## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE WORSHIP OF PRAYER AND PRAISE.

HAVING noticed the typical services, we now enter upon the second part of our subject, which may be called, by way of distinction, THE SPIRITUAL WORSHIP OF THE JEWS, although it has been frequently shown, that all the sacrificial rites had a typical, and therefore a spiritual meaning. It has also been called the moral law. Only the ritual connected with sacrifices, strictly speaking, was the law of God by Moses; the moral or spiritual was given with the nature of man, at his creation, and was continued as a part of the national covenant of the Jews, and the observance of it was urged as a condition of their national welfare. This worship, as already stated, has been the same under all the three dispensations, and consists of prayer and praise. It is so obvious that such addresses to the Creator and Redeemer are both a duty and a privilege, that there could be no need to lay stress upon the importance and reasonableness of this service, and to enjoin it on the same terms as the ceremonial rites of the law; but there is quite enough, both in Deuteronomy and Joshua, to satisfy us that Moses and his successor taught the Israelites, that they were to draw near to God in acts of mental worship. And the same principles are taught in every part of Scripture. The necessity for prayer at once appears, when we consider the dependent condition of all creatures, who can only be supported and supplied by that bounty and liberality which at first created all things. The house of the Lord (see Isa. lvi. 7) is especially to be denominated the house of prayer. Nor should the remark of Henry be forgotten, that, as in the *institutions*, so in the *devotions* of the Old Testament, there is more of Christ than perhaps the Old Testament saints were aware of.

There is no reason to doubt that Adam and Eve were made partakers of the grace set forth in the promises of redemption, and that they instructed their children in the

same truths. This appears from Abel's conduct, and the early distinction, Gen iv. 26, between those who received these doctrines, and professed themselves followers of God, and others who must have rejected the truth; or a difference would not have been noticed. When God is looked up to as a Creator and Benefactor, and much more where he is believed in as a Saviour and Redeemer, the heart will be lifted up in prayer and praise. As in the case of Enoch, and of Noah, the renewed heart will walk with God, and how can this intercourse be maintained unless by prayer? They came to God, believing that he is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him, Heb. ix. 6.

We find, in the early history of the patriarchs after the flood, enough to show that they attended to prayer, both for themselves and for others. Abraham prayed for Sodom. Lot prayed for himself and his family, Gen. xviii. xiv. Abimelech was told that Abraham would pray for him, Gen. xx. 7, and he did so plead. Eliezer, Abraham's steward, probably prayed at the well, Gen. xxiv. 12. Rebekah's mother and brother prayed for her. Isaac's prayer in the field appears to have been his regular evening practice, and he prayed for his sons, Gen. xxvii. Jacob wrestled all night with God in prayer—but it is unnecessary to multiply instances of this nature. These all confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, they called God their God, and desired a heavenly inheritance. How can faith exist without prayer? And praise necessarily accompanies prayer; it is part of it. The names by which the patriarchs called various places, frequently were acts of prayer or praise. Thus, when prevented from offering up Isaac, Abraham called the place Jehovah-Jireh, which mean, "The Lord will provide." When the herdmen of Gerar ceased to strive with the herdmen of Isaac, he called the name of the well Rehoboth, or room, adding an acknowledgment of God's goodness, Gen. xxvi. 22. Jacob called the place where he had prayed, Peniel, expressing his thankfulness that he had been permitted to see God, and yet was preserved. The blessing the patriarchs uttered respecting their descendants, were both prayers and praises; see particularly the words of dying

Jacob. Leah not only praised the Lord for his providential mercy to her, but expressly named one of her children Judah; that is, "praise." The book of Job, also, is full of passages which indicate a mental and spiritual communion with his God. It may further be observed, that most of the places where the patriarchs erected altars for sacrifice had previously been marked by their spiritual intercourse with God. Thus, at Bethel, or the house of God, where Jacob set up a pillar, or pile of stones, to keep in remembrance his remarkable vision, an altar afterwards was built by Divine command.

It cannot be necessary to show that prayer and praise, or spiritual worship, were continually offered under the second dispensation, without sacrifices, as well as when accompanied by offerings. The solemn injunction, "Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might;" see Deut. vi. 4, 5, plainly shows a spiritual religion of the heart, not mere outward ceremonies like heathen sacrifices. In Numb. vi. 23—26; x. 35, 36; Deut. xxvi. 3, 5—11, 13—15, are short devotional formularies of prayer for stated occasions. In the ceremonies appointed for the expiation of a murder when the perpetrator was unknown, a prayer was appointed, which is recorded Deut. xxi. 7, 8. In accordance with this principle, the prophet Samuel expressly declares, that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams," 1 Sam. xv. 22. The occasion upon which these words were uttered particularly claims notice. King Saul and the people had disobeyed the Divine directions, and thought to compensate for so doing by offering sacrifices. The prophet Hosea calls upon Israel to return to the Lord, and when accepted, to offer "the calves of the lips;" not the sacrifices of slain beasts, but the thanksgivings of the heart.

The expressions in the fiftieth Psalm imply that God would not accept the typical sacrifice, where thanksgiving unto God, and the calling upon him in the day of trouble, had been neglected; see ver. 14, 15. In ver. 23, it is expressly said, that offering praise is glorifying God: see

also Prov. xxi. 3, the strong declaration, Isa. i. 11—17, and Jer. vii. 21—23; Hos. vi. 6; Amos v. 21, 22; Mic. vi. 6—8. To these may be added the declaration of the scribes, confirmed by our Lord himself, "To love God with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices," Mark xii. 33. The book of Psalms may be considered as expressions of spiritual worship in prayer and praise. And we must not forget the noble hymns of praise, sung by Miriam, Moses, Deborah, and Hannah, in earlier times.

There can be no occasion to say much to show that prayer and praise are directed under the third, or Christian dispensation. We have the precept, to "Pray always;" and "Pray without ceasing;" the promise, "Ask, and ye shall receive;" the injunction, "In every thing give thanks;" and the assurance, that "Whatsoever we ask in the name of Christ it shall be given." And the apostle says, "Speak to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

Does the reader ask why so much is here said upon a matter so plain, and in itself so evident? The answer may easily be given—Mankind are not inclined to act as though these Divine precepts were self-evident. Do we not find many acting like Saul of old? How else do those act who perhaps scarcely ever pray, or commune with their God in private, yet are punctual in their attendance on outward ordinances, regular at their place of worship, constant in receiving the Lord's supper, and perhaps never omitting any one of the formularies in their "Companion to the Altar!" May we not ask such persons to consider wherein their sacrifices differ from the rejected offerings of old? They are outward and formal acknowledgments of the Saviour, just as were the typical sacrifices; but are they more than the sacrifice of fools, spoken of Eccl. v. 1? And we may add, that the words in ver 4, "He hath no pleasure in fools," should startle many, for what are prayers but vows, solemnly expressed, therefore to be performed as solemnly.



## CHAPTER XIV.

PLACES FOR SPIRITUAL WORSHIP—PROSEUCHAS—  
SYNAGOGUES, AND THE SYNAGOGUE SERVICE.

WE now have to notice the places used for prayer and praise. We read of Isaac's meditating and praying in the field, and of Abraham's planting a grove in Beersheba, Gen xxi. 33, and there calling on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God; but there is no reason to suppose that in early days any buildings were erected for this purpose, and kept separate for this use only. The social worship, we may suppose, was family worship; and on the most solemn occasions, doubtless at the place of sacrifice; perhaps some other persons might occasionally attend from various motives.

The earliest mention of any separate building, apparently used expressly for religious worship, is the first tabernacle, mentioned Exod. xxxiii. 7. The use of this, indeed, is uncertain, and the most probable opinion is, that it was a temporary building erected for the use of Moses, in transacting the daily affairs of the congregation. But we find that soon after, a tabernacle expressly for religious typical worship was erected; this was carried by the Israelites in all their journeyings to the promised land, and set up wherever they rested.

As individuals continued to offer sacrifices in other places, even after the tabernacle had been erected and the ceremonial rites instituted, we may conclude that they resorted to those places also for prayer and praise. The history of Micah shows that he had a house, or apartment, especially devoted to the images, the worship of which he mixed with the worship of Jehovah; and we cannot doubt that those who continued faithful to the true religion would have places where they assembled for Divine service.

Prideaux considers that from an early period there were places for the people to offer up prayers to God, which were called by a name signifying the assemblies of God, but in after times proseuchas. These were open enclosures,

built in private and retired spots, frequently in high places, and on mountains, without any covering, except perhaps the shade of trees. And those high places which are not condemned in Scripture, probably were proseuchas. Samuel resorted to such a place, 1 Sam. ix. 19: another is mentioned in the following chapter, and others elsewhere. Prideaux thinks that the sanctuary of the Lord in Shechem, by which Joshua set up a pillar under an oak, Josh. xxiv. 26, was one of these proseuchas, and it is evident there were trees near it. Epiphanius describes such a place near Shechem, in the fourth century. Several passages in the New Testament mention proseuchas as resorted to among the Jews in later times. The passage, Luke vi. 12, when literally translated is, "In those days Jesus retired to a mountain to pray, and he passed all the night in a proseucha of God." We cannot suppose our Lord would have resorted with this intent to a building forbidden by the law, or used for idolatrous worship, nor did any such places exist at that time in Judea. St. Paul found a proseucha at Philippi, to which Lydia resorted, Acts xvi. He taught there, and her conversion encourages regular attendance on public worship. The Jewish proseuchas are noticed by Juvenal, who was a heathen Roman poet. Other writers also mention the existence of proseuchas in different countries. Philo complains that the people of Alexandria, in Egypt, cut down the trees by which the proseuchas in that city were shaded. A proseucha at Mispah is mentioned by the author of the first book of the Maccabees, (iii. 46.)

We may also trace in the Scriptures, that the Jews resorted to the cities of the Levites, and the schools of the prophets, to be instructed in religious matters; and from the observation of the husband of the Shunamite, 2 Kings iv. 23, we learn that these assemblies were usual on the new moons and sabbaths. But there is no decisive statement of regular public services till after the Babylonish captivity. Prideaux thinks this may have been one of the causes why the people were so easily led into idolatry, when the kings and rulers were men who did not take active measures to keep up true religion throughout the

country. Such times appear to be pointed out by the expression, "They did that which was right in their own eyes." It is plain from the Scripture records, that during the times of the judges, and also under many of the kings, public matters of a religious, as well as of a civil nature, were in many respects subject to changes, and often in confusion.

The synagogues were buildings expressly for worship; they require particular notice. Learned men have written much on the subject; and it is now generally agreed, that there are no sufficient grounds for believing that these existed before the Babylonish captivity. It is thought Psalm lxxiv. was either written after that period, and that ver. 8, refers to the destruction of the synagogues by Antiochus, or that the expression, which in the original is, "all the assemblies of God," describes the proseuchas already mentioned.

During the captivity, the Jews appear to have resorted to the houses of the prophets or other holy men, who were accustomed to instruct their families, and to read the Scriptures, especially the law; see Ezek. xiv. 1, xx. 1; Neh. viii. 18: and though it is impossible to trace the origin of synagogues, we may conclude that the advantages found to result from such assemblies induced their general adoption. Probably they might be used by the Jews in foreign countries, before they became general in Judea. Philo, a Jewish native of Alexandria, contends for their antiquity. The practice of Ezra, to read the law publicly, with explanations, may also have had something to do with these assemblies becoming general, and they were very numerous in the time of the Asmonean princes. The best way to reconcile the different opinions on the subject, appears to be, to suppose that the people from their first settlement in Canaan used to meet in the open air, in high places and proseuchas; also in houses, and particularly at the houses of the prophets: and that, after the captivity, these meetings became more general and regular, houses were built expressly for the purpose of worship, and, before the time when our Saviour was upon earth, the synagogue worship had become regularly established. The assembling

together in the open air, as mentioned Neh. viii. 1, and Ezra x. 9, would soon be found inconvenient in many respects.

The rules respecting synagogues were, that one should be built wherever at least ten persons of full age and free condition could be got together to form a congregation, for unless that number of persons were present, the service could not be performed. It was therefore usual to appoint ten men to attend whenever the service was performed; in some cases they seem to have had regular salaries for so doing. In our Saviour's time the synagogues had so increased that there was no town without one or more of these buildings. In Tiberias, the Jewish writers say there were twelve synagogues, and in Jerusalem no less than four hundred and eighty. Even if this number is an exaggeration, it shows that the synagogue worship was general, and that the temple worship did not render it unnecessary. It is an additional proof, that the national typical services were not intended to render spiritual and personal worship unnecessary, though even these had often been allowed to degenerate into formality.

The synagogues were not required to be of any particular form, although they were similar in their internal arrangements; the western end being for the ministers and elders, the eastern for the body of the congregation. There was a table on which the roll or book of the law was spread, and on the east side a chest or ark, covered with a rich veil, in which the roll was kept. Also there was a pulpit or reading pew, large enough to hold several persons. The seats were so arranged that the people looked towards the book of the law and the elders. The elders sat with their backs to the ark and their faces towards the people. These were the chief seats the Pharisees were so eager to occupy, see Matt. xxiii. 6, and a similar desire among the Christian Hebrews seems to be condemned, James ii. 3. The women sat in a gallery inclosed with lattice work, so that they could see without being seen. To build a synagogue appears to have been deemed an act of piety, as the erecting of a church or chapel is considered at the present day, Luke vii. 5. The

modern Jewish synagogues resembled the ancient ones as to many points of their interior arrangements.

The officers of the synagogue were: 1. The rulers, Luke viii. 41, 49. These had the chief care and direction of the matters concerning the synagogue and its services, and formed a sort of council or tribunal of judgment. They were more than one; thus at Corinth both Crispus and Sosthenes are mentioned as rulers of the synagogue. The number usually was three. 2. The second officer was called the angel of the church; he was the minister of the synagogue, and laboured among them in word or doctrine. He also appointed the readers, and stood by them to see that they read aright. Hence he was also called, *hezen*, or overseer. The title "angels," given to the ministers of the seven churches in the Revelation, appears to have reference to this officer. 3. The deacons, almoners, or pastors of the poor, were usually three in number. They collected alms from house to house; there was also a poor's box in the synagogue. From these funds the poor Jews were relieved on the sabbath-eve. The deacons had the care of the utensils of the synagogue. 4. The interpreter, who stood beside the reader, to translate the portion of Scripture from the Hebrew into the language then used. As for instance, in Judea, into the Chaldee dialect. Among the Greek Jews the law was read in the Greek version of the Old Testament called the Septuagint. To these officers are to be added the doctor or lecturer of the divinity school, and his interpreter.

In the methods for the synagogue services, as Lowman remarks, the Jews appear to have been left to the ancient customs of the Abrahamic worship, for the Mosaic ritual contained no directions for these services. They differed but little from the present worship of Christian assemblies, and thus connect the three dispensations together.

The routine of the public service was as follows. The angel or minister ascended the raised platform or pulpit, the people all standing in a posture of devotion. Their liturgies or prescribed forms at first were few, but afterwards increased to a great number, when the service became long and tedious, and the directions respecting it

intricate and perplexed. The most solemn part of the synagogue prayers are the Shema, or Shemoneh Esreh, eighteen prayers which the Jews say were composed and appointed by Ezra. They certainly are very ancient, a considerable part of them were probably in use in the time of our Saviour. The first will suffice as a specimen: "Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, the God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the Great God, powerful and tremendous, the High God, bountifully dispensing benefits, the Creator and Possessor of the universe, who rememberest the good deeds of our fathers, and in thy love sendest a Redeemer to those who are descended from them, for thy name sake, O King, our Helper, our Saviour, and our Shield. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who art the Shield of Abraham."

These prayers, or a part of them, were to be said by all Jews every day. Many other prayers were added to these; and our Lord in his time found fault with the long public devotions of the Pharisees, as being made merely for a pretence, Matt. xxiii. 14; Luke xx. 47. A prayer is offered by the modern Jews for the rebuilding of the temple, also a curse or execration on the Christians. The people responded at the close of each prayer, saying "Amen," or "So be it." Among the idle superstitions of the later Jews, may be included their opinion of the efficacy attached to this word, some believing that the gates of paradise will be open to any one who says Amen, with all his might! They covered their heads while they prayed, thereby professing reverence, and that they were unworthy to appear before God.

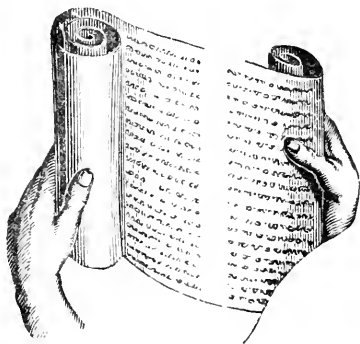
The second part of the synagogue service was the reading the Scriptures. This comprised: 1. Three portions of Scripture, called the Kerioth Shema, from the word with which the first begins. They are, Dent. vi. 6—9; xi. 13—21; Numb. xv. 37—41, and form a solemn part of the Jewish service. 2. A portion of the law, or the five books of Moses. These are divided in fifty-four parashoith or sections, one being allotted to every sabbath, thus supplying enough for their longest or intercalary year, and in other years some of the shortest sections were put together.

This annual course of reading began at the feast of tabernacles. 3. Selections from the prophetic writings, called haphthoroth. Antiochus Epiphanes having prohibited the public reading of the law, passages from the prophets were substituted, and were retained when the prohibition as to the law was removed. The haphthoroth are portions from the historical and prophetic books intermixed; there are some variations as to these among the Jews of different nations; but the portions of the law, and many of those of the prophets also, remain now the same as they were in the days of our Saviour. Henderson found that the prophecy, Joel ii. 28—32, forms a part of the service for the day of pentecost, among the Kairite Jews who live in the Crimea. The apostle Peter quoted those verses in his discourse to the Jews on the day of pentecost, Acts ii. 16—21. It is very probable, that in the days of the apostles this passage formed a part of the haphthoroth of the day, which would render the quotation particularly forcible and appropriate. The other modern Jews stop at ver. 27, thus omitting a very important part, a circumstance not easily to be accounted for, excepting by the fact of its having been thus quoted, to the conviction of many of the Jews in the days of the apostle.

The number of readers in the synagogue varied from three to seven, but there might not be fewer than three readers of the law. On the sabbath, seven was the usual number. If priests and Levites were present, one of each read a portion, the other five were private Israelites. They were selected by the minister, who chose whom he pleased. The person called upon then went into the desk or pulpit with the minister, and the roll being opened, the reader waited till the ruler of the synagogue told him to commence. He began with a short prayer, blessing God that he had chosen them to be his people, and had given to them his law. The minister, as already stated, stood by the readers; if any word was omitted or pronounced wrong, he made them correct the error: this point was strictly observed. The plan appears well calculated to interest the people at large in the public services, and would assist the minister in discharging the duties of his office. The little relief in this respect provided for the ministers of

Protestant churches surely is to be regretted; without referring to the course pursued by any churches in particular, we may say that it is painful to see the strength of the preacher often expended upon details, which could be well performed by many others there present.

The last part of the synagogue service was expounding the Scriptures and preaching from them. In Luke iv. is an account how the first of these was conducted in the synagogue service, in the time of Christ. Let the reader refer to that chapter, and read ver. 15—22. This took place at Nazareth, Christ's own city, where he would be a member of the synagogue. He was called out to read the section of the prophets appointed for that day, which appears to have been the 51st haphtoroth. This now begins at ver. 10, but our Lord read from the first verse. A. Clarke well asks, "Have the Jews altered this haphtoroth, knowing the use our blessed Lord made of it among their ancestors?" He stood up to read the word of God as was customary for the reader to do, and unrolling the manuscript, which would be something in this form, till he came



to the lesson for the day, he read it; then rolling the book again, he gave it to the minister, and sat down while explaining it, as was usual among the Jews. Sometimes,



when the reader expounded, he did not read the whole of the appointed portion.

The preaching was arranged in the following manner. The minister might call on any person who was present, to speak or preach after the regular services of the day were gone through, and from several passages in the Gospels and Acts, as well as the testimony of the Jewish writers, we find it was not unusual to invite strangers to do this. Thus, Acts xiii. 15, 16, after the portions from the law and the prophets had been read, the rulers of the synagogue sent to Paul and his companions, saying, "Men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." Upon which Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience," etc. Other passages show that it was customary for the apostles thus to preach in the synagogues. Our Lord's history records the same. Luke iv. 16, shows that he used to attend the synagogues every sabbath day; and it appears to have been his custom, even where he was not a member, for him to teach or preach after the law and the prophets had been read. Here is a wide distinction between the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, and the typical of slain beasts under the ceremonial law. For administering the latter, a separate order of men, all of one tribe, were trained up from their youth, and especially devoted to these services; but it was not so with the former. The apostle, speaking of the spiritual priesthood after the order of Melchisedec, says, "He of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."

How completely the Jewish rabbins, even in prayer, lost sight of the vicarious offices of the Mediator, as represented by the sacrifices, and substituted what was personally their own, appears from the following account, given by Schoettgen:—When Rabbi Scheschett once fasted, after he had finished his prayers, he said, "O Lord of the universe, it is known to thee, that if any one who had sinned stood in thy temple, he brought a sacrifice to thee, but of that

no part was offered excepting the fat and the blood, and these being offered he was cleansed from his sin. Now I fast so that *my* fat and *my* blood waste away; may it then please thee that my fat and my blood, thus wasted away, may be accounted as if I had offered them upon thy altars, and grant me thy grace." How the Jews rested in "the beggarly elements," appears from another extract. "The Israelites said, While the temple stood we offered to thee fat and other things by which was obtained expiation. Now we offer to thee our fat, our blood, and our lives, may it please thee that they may be an expiation for us!"

The days for the synagogue services were the 2nd of the week, or Monday; the 5th, Thursday; and Saturday, or the sabbath. The first two were called days of assembling, and were kept as fasts by the strict Jews; to this the Pharisee probably refers, Luke xviii. 12. It seems also to be alluded to, Acts xiii. 42, where the original words strictly mean, "in the middle sabbath," probably the next synagogue day. As the people were anxious about what they had heard, we may suppose they did not wish to defer hearing more on the subject for a whole week.

The reason assigned for this appointment, by which a portion of the law was publicly read every three days, deserves notice, though it is connected with that mystical plan of interpretation, by which the Jews of later times often made void both the law and the prophets. In Exod. xv. 22, it is stated that the Israelites were in great distress, on their travelling three days together in the wilderness without meeting with any water. By their mystical rules of interpretation, they explained this water to mean the law; and said that they were thus taught that they ought not to allow three days to pass without hearing a portion of it. They therefore divided the weekly portion into two, by reading half on each of the days of assembling, and on the sabbath they read the whole in the morning, and again in the evening. The same plan was pursued with the portion from the prophets. Surely Christians may learn a useful lesson from this. The Holy Scriptures, which holy men of old wrote as they were inspired by God the Spirit, are as water to the soul; and

many a weary, thirsty soul finds them refreshing, as water is to the tired, thirsty bodily frame. We have advantages, by the art of printing and the free circulation of Bibles, which the Jews had not, few of whom could have the Scriptures in his possession. But how many there are among us, who regard not this living water in any form! who are careless as to the wants of their souls, though most anxious to supply every desire of their bodies! Such as these allow the living water to remain untasted, from the end of one week to that of another; but they will bitterly lament this neglect at the solemn day of account.

Again, we may here remark upon this attention to the public ordinances, as calling for the notice of professing Christians. The Jews found that it was good not to neglect the assembling themselves together at shorter intervals than the weekly sabbaths; and is it not the same with Christians? When this intermediate assembling together is neglected, assuredly the soul will be less healthy and vigorous than when it is frequently and regularly refreshed and nourished by the truths of the gospel. Reader, you are a traveller and pilgrim, passing through the wilderness of this world; it is not good for your soul, that you should journey from sabbath to sabbath without hearing of a Saviour's love, and partaking of the gospel feast set before the followers of Christ during the interval. Use your privileges. Where there are weekly services, dispensing the bread of life, enjoy them; and if your lot is in a barren and thirsty land where water can scarcely be found, pray to Him who can cause rivers to flow even in the driest places. Well does the writer remember the simple statement of a poor pious man, who mentioned that his regular employment once was such as deprived him of the opportunity of attending duly on public ordinances. He then related how he had earnestly and constantly pleaded with God, to permit him to enjoy such opportunities more frequently, and added, that God had heard his prayer. An outward affliction had been sent, that disabled him from following the employment which, from regard to his family, he had not ventured to relinquish; but all was ordered in mercy, and he described with joy, how he was now

enabled, every day in the week, to assemble together with some who cared for the Lord, by attending some place of worship, or joining some companies who were real followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

On the days of synagogue service, the people met three times—at nine in the morning, at noon, and at three in the afternoon; hours corresponding with the temple services. None might pass the door of a synagogue during service, unless they had some object in view requiring them to do so. Reader, you have been passing the doors of a Christian synagogue when the voice of prayer or praise caught your attention; did *you* pass carelessly by, although no call of duty required your presence elsewhere? or did you enter and join in the services of God's house?

The synagogues were used for private prayer as well as the temple, individuals resorting thither as a place for retirement. Schools were sometimes taught in the synagogues. The teachers sat on raised seats, while the scholars stood at their feet or before them. St. Paul says he was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, one of the most celebrated teachers of that day, Acts xxii. 3. The words of the apostle, Acts xxiv. 12, and other passages, indicate that synagogues often were places of discussion, conference, and debates connected with matters of religion, and the rabbins and elders used to meet for such discussions.

The rulers of the synagogues possessed a power of judgment. This they exercised, with the concurrence of the elders, over the members who offended against the law. The culprit was stripped from his shoulders to his middle, and bound by the hands to a low pillar, so that he was obliged to lean forward and present his back to the scourge. The law forbade the infliction of more than forty stripes, and in order to be sure not to exceed this number, the Jews usually restricted the punishment to thirty-nine. It was usually inflicted by thirteen blows from an instrument with three cords or lashes. The punishment of scourging in a synagogue, was to be considered rather as a fatherly correction than as a public shameful punishment; but it was often abused for vindictive or persecuting purposes. The apostle Paul seems to record five such punishments

having been inflicted upon him, 2 Cor. xi. 24 : they probably were administered with considerable severity, as they proceeded from hatred to Christianity. Our Lord alluded to the same punishment, Matt. x. 17; xxiii. 34, when he told his disciples that they should be scourged in the synagogues. In Luke xii. 11, there is reference to these courts of judgment. Saul desired letters to the synagogues in Damascus with the same design, Acts ix. 2.

Excommunication, or casting out, was a very serious punishment. The offender on whom this sentence passed, was shut out from joining the public prayers and religious services; he was looked upon as a mere heathen, and debarred of all the privileges enjoyed by a descendant of Abraham. This most severe sentence was denounced against all who confessed that Jesus was the Christ, John ix. 22; accordingly the blind man, who had been restored to sight by our Lord, was cast out, or excommunicated, when he declared his belief of the Divine nature of the person by whose word the miracle was accomplished.

In the schools taught in the synagogues, the youth received instruction as to the Divine law. In the temple, as well as in the synagogues, assemblies of learned men were held; in one of which the parents of our Lord found him, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions, and all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. Lightfoot describes three such schools, or places for lectures and inquiries, which were held regularly within the precincts of the temple; one of these was the Sanhedrim, when not occupied as a court of judgment: he thinks it is possible, that may have been the place where our Lord was found.

Observe the striking similarity, in all essential respects, between the public services of the Christian churches and the Jewish synagogues. This is an important point to keep in mind. Here is clearly seen the identity of the spiritual worship of the first and second dispensations, distinct from the ordinances of Divine service and the worldly sanctuary of the first covenant, which were figures for the time then present, but were done away when Christ came as a High Priest of good things to come, Heb. ix.

## CHAPTER XV.

PRIVATE DEVOTIONS OF THE JEWS—FASTS, PUBLIC  
AND PRIVATE.

THE private devotions of the Jews next claim notice. Enough has been said on the subject of their prayers, to show that prayer was considered an individual as well as a national duty. Nor is there occasion here to enlarge upon that secret communion with God, which will ever be the object of the devout soul, its privilege as well as its duty. By such, a compliance with the injunction of the apostle, "Praying always," Eph. vi. 18, will be accounted a privilege, and not viewed as a burden; believers seek to live always in a prayerful spirit. Nor will the rule of the psalmist, to call upon God seven times a day, be deemed a yoke too heavy to be borne. The seasons for intercourse with our blessed Lord and Saviour will become more and more frequent, although not regulated by any precise enumeration, or defined form of words.

The stated hours of prayer, among the Jews, were the third and ninth, or nine in the morning and six in the afternoon. In the later times the repeating of the shema, (see p. 138,) twice every day, was expressly required from every Jew. Wotton considers that our Lord alluded to this, when he answered the lawyer as to what was the first and great commandment of the law. Our Lord answered from the shema, which at once satisfied this scribe, who was accustomed to recite these words daily. But when the spirit of pharisaism prevailed, long formularies were set forth, to be repeated at these hours, wherever persons might be. We learn, from Matt. vi. 5, that the Pharisees were pleased when these hours found them in the streets, and that they not only recited their prayers in public, but at the corners of the streets, where they might be seen by the passengers in more than one place of resort. Wotton has given a full description of these postures in prayer. They denoted humiliation, and were various, as

the following texts show, and that the prayer was mental as well as audible: Exod. ix. 29; xxxiv. 8; Isa. i. 15; 1 Sam. i. 13; Luke xviii. 11, 13; Psa. cxliii. 6; cxi. 2; 2 Chron. vi. 13; Ezra ix. 5; Lam. iii. 41; Dan. vi. 10; Matt. xxvi. 39; Acts vii. 60; 1 Tim. ii. 1.

Prayers were offered both standing and kneeling, and even prostrate on the ground, when the suppliant was deeply agonized, as Matt. xxvi. 39. Kneeling was considered the most proper, as expressing humility, contrition, and subjection. Thus Solomon, 2 Chron. vi. 13, Ezra ix. 5, Stephen, Acts vii. 60. The publican, deeply in earnest, smote on his breast while he prayed "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Luke xviii. 13. Frequently the hands were expanded or raised up in prayer. Thus St. Paul speaks of lifting up holy hands. The numerous postures in prayer customary in the east, are represented in the sketches on page 149. The followers of Shammai said, that men ought literally to lie down in their evening devotional services, and quoted the words of Dent. vi. 7. These peculiar postures in prayer may also be considered as outward testimonies that the offerer was engaged in worship. Upon this subject it is sufficient to observe, that the posture cannot be of essential consequence; but, drawing near to the great Sovereign of heaven and earth, should be done with reverence in manner, as well as in the matter of the petitions we offer; and it is well to use such a posture as may promote spirituality in our feelings, and keep our attention alive to the petitions we offer; for who has not often groaned in bitterness of soul for the wanderings of his mind in prayer!

That forms of prayer were in use among the Jews in the time of our Lord is evident, not only from the traditions of the Jewish writers, but from the request of the disciples to Christ, who, in compliance with their petition, gave them a model by which they might frame their prayers, and which might serve as a form for those unable to extend their supplications farther. This was, in fact, the practice at that time, a short summary being prepared for those unable to learn the whole routine of the sheina. Wotton has given the form at length, as, probably, it was used in

the time of our Lord. It is too long for insertion here, and one prayer has been already given. He says, "How great is the difference between these and the Lord's prayer! What vain repetitions are many times here! What little variation of sense, and yet how great a multitude and variety of words!" In these prayers of the Jews very few of the necessities of life are pointed at. No resignation to the will of God, no confession of human frailty, appear throughout the whole; but chiefly a magnificent ostentation of God's great and miraculous mercies, so spoken of, as if they thought themselves worthy of all the things which had been wrought for their forefathers.

With respect to our Lord's prayer, it has been shown that the Jewish prayers then in use contained some similar expressions. It adopted and concentrated the following clauses contained in their prayers, "Our Father who art in heaven, be gracious unto us! O Lord our God, hallowed be thy name, and let the remembrance of thee be glorified in heaven above, and upon earth here below. Let thy kingdom reign over us, now and for ever. The holy men of old said, Remit and forgive unto all men whatsoever they have done against me. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil thing. For thine is the kingdom, and thou shalt reign in glory for ever and evermore." Some formularies of prayer, directed in Numbers and Deuteronomy, have been already noticed.

In reference to this prayer, Montgomery beautifully observes, "How many millions and millions of times has that prayer been preferred by Christians of all denominations! So wide, indeed, is the sound thereof gone forth, that daily, and almost without intermission, from the ends of the earth, and afar off upon the sea, it is ascending to heaven, like incense and a pure offering. Nor needs it the gift of prophecy to foretel that, although 'heaven and earth shall pass away,' these words of our blessed Lord 'shall not pass away,' till every petition in it has been answered, till the kingdom of God shall come, and his will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

Fasting was often connected with prayer, both in public and private. The great day of atonement was a solemn national fast, on which the people were "to afflict their





POSTURES IN PRAYER CUSTOMARY IN THE EAST.

(FROM CALNET.)

souls;" an expression which showed that the service was to be spiritual. They were to lament for their past sins and iniquities, and to humble themselves before the Lord. This was the only public and general fast directed by the law; but fasts were also held on other occasions, by direction of the supreme authority: see Judg. xx. 26; 1 Sam. vii. 6; 2 Sam. iii. 35; 2 Chron. xx. 3; Isa. lviii. 3—12; Jer. xxxvi. 9. In the case of the fast ordered by Jezebel in the name of Ahab, 1 King xxi. 9, is an instance of a fast ordered by authority, but to cloak a most wicked purpose. Ezra and his company fasted at the river Abava, when they implored the Divine blessing on their journey, and the undertaking connected with it. After the captivity four regular days for fasting were appointed, which are enumerated Zech. viii. 19. One was in the fourth month, to commemorate the famine in Jerusalem, when there was no bread left in the city, Jer. lii. 6; Lam. ii. 12, 20. This also is thought to have had some reference to the breaking of the tables of stone by Moses, and the erecting an idol in the temple by Manasseh. One, in the fifth month, for the destruction of the temple, mentioned Zech. vii. 3. In the seventh month, on account of the murder of Gedaliah, Jer. xli. 2. And another in the tenth month, for the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Public fasts were also appointed in times of danger, Joel i. 14; ii. 12. To abstain from food, and publicly to show humiliation and sorrow for sin, is a duty, and a proceeding obvious even to the heathen; there is a striking instance recorded in the book of Jonah, the fast at Nineveh was so general, that even the cattle were kept from food.

The private fasts were numerous in the latter days of the Jewish state; some were observed publicly in the synagogues. Many persons fasted twice in the week, on the second and fifth days; and every month had its fasts. In the month Abib, they fasted on the 1st, for the death of Nadab and Abihu; on the 10th, for the death of Miriam; on the 24th, for the death of Joshua; and the 29th, when they prayed for the latter rain: but it is needless to enumerate all these fasts; we may suppose that they were not fully observed by the people in general, although the

Pharisees might make a public appearance of fasting often. Our Lord's reference to their conduct, when he severely censured it, would include their private fasts also: and some fasted on the day before the new moon, on the anniversaries of the death of relatives, or of other severe calamities; but these fasts were not to be held on the sabbath or any festival, nor on the sixth day of the week. The disciples of John fasted often, Luke v. 33: this was a religious observance, characteristic of the solemn mission of John the Baptist. The fasts always began in the evening, and continued till the following evening. From Zech. xii. 12—14, it appears that the male and female parts of the families were apart from each other on the days of fasting. No peculiar ceremonials were directed, but the public services were those usual at the time when the fasts happened to be held. In 1 Sam. vii. 6, is mention of water being poured out on a fast day. This might be intended as a symbolical expression of the pouring forth of the heart, required at such a season. In Jer. xxxvi. 6, we find Jeremiah was ordered to read the Divine warnings of the approaching national judgments, to the people assembled on that day in the temple. On these occasions outward appearances of grief were manifested: coarse garments were worn; rent and disordered apparel conveyed an idea of sorrow and grief; ashes were scattered on the head, whether the occasion were public or private, 2 Sam. iii. 31; Psa. xxxv. 13; Isa. lviii. 5; Lam. ii. 10; Joel i. 13, 14; the countenance was downcast; weeping, and the voice of supplication were heard. Against assuming such outward appearances of grief our Lord cautioned his disciples, Matt. vi. 16, 17. Thus, also, the prophet Joel exhorted the people to rend their hearts, and not their garments, ii. 13. The fasting of Esther and her attendants, before she ventured into the king's presence to entreat for the lives of her people, is a striking instance, both of the observance of this rite and of its efficacy, when accompanied by the prayer of faith.

Upon the subject of fasting, it is well to observe, that it is of use as a help to a devotional spirit, therefore, when carried to such an extent as to weaken the system, and to

render the body unfit for religious exercises, it cannot be rightly considered as an acceptable service. Thus the rigid observances of some of the ancient hermits, and of some popish monastic orders of modern date, are equally distant from the spirit which should actuate the followers of Christ. Such fasts are no better than the fasts of the Pharisees, against which our Lord distinctly cautioned his disciples. That degree of abstinence which will promote liveliness of spirit is desirable, even as the hearty feeding and repletion, which indisposes the mind for communion with God, and attendance on his worship, is to be avoided. Let the reader turn to Isa. lviii. 3—7, where it is clearly stated what abstinence is acceptable to God. Little, however, need be said at the present day to caution persons against carrying abstinence too far. If we look round our public assemblies, we see a very different appearance from that which our Lord often witnessed in the synagogues, in his time, and which he describes, Matt. vi. 16. He would doubtless now rather caution against the contrary extreme. Having thus noticed passages which condemn fasting in a wrong spirit and for wrong purposes, let us refer to some texts which show what right fasting is. Let the reader bear these in mind, as the Scripture rule under the Christian, as well as under the Jewish dispensation: Psa. xxxv. 13; lxix. 10; Dan. ix. 3; Joel ii. 12; Luke ii. 37; Acts xiii. 2, 3.



## CHAPTER XVI.

## VOWS AND PURIFICATIONS

THE Jewish vows were observances closely connected with this part of our subject; but they were limited to the Mosaic dispensation, rather than applicable to the Christian system. The directions as to vows will be found, Lev. xxvii. Numb. xxx. Deut. xxiii. 21—23. These passages show, that the particulars of a vow were to be distinctly expressed, and not merely a mental resolution; this would prevent many unnecessary scruples in the minds of conscientious persons, arising from passing thoughts and hasty suggestions. It is also clearly stated, that if the party who made a vow was under the control of others, the vow was not binding without the sanction of the husband, parent, or superior. But herein the Jews made the law of God of none effect through their traditions: see Matt. xv. 4—6; Mark vii. 9—13. If a man declared that his property was “*corban*,” or devoted to God, he was considered as forbidden to afford his parents any relief from that time. This was a device to let a parent perish from want, and, under pretence of a religious obligation, to gratify malignant or covetous feelings, by directly breaking the fifth commandment. In this case, the son was not required actually to give to the temple, or to the priests, what ought to have been given to the parent; it was enough if he declared an intention to do so. Encouragement was thereby given to an avaricious spirit; this was contrary to the express law, Lev. xxvii. 15, 22, 23, which shows how the Lord God knows the lurking thoughts and propensities of the heart, and how the love of riches would make the people incline to cut short even their holy offerings; therefore, if any one changed his mind, and desired to retain what he had devoted to the Lord’s service, he not only had to bestow what was equal in value, but to add one-fifth part more.

At first we may be inclined to doubt that even the Pharisees could countenance such a direct breach of the Divine law, as the law of the *corban*, when its advantage to them

was but contingent. A little reflection, however, will explain this. When the law of God had been thus broken, the conscience would be brought into bondage; and, when the heart is not renewed, relief under trouble in such a case will be sought from man, rather than directly from God himself. The Pharisees of old, and the anti-christian priesthood of later days, have availed themselves of this feeling, and large sums have often been bequeathed to superstitious purposes, in the hope of obtaining relief from self-accusation, for the misemployment of comparatively small amounts. Here the declarations of God's word are express: Man is required to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God, Micah vi. 8. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 John i. 1, 9. It is not the offering of thousands of rams, or ten thousands of rivers of oil, that will satisfy for the sin of the soul. God can overrule the false ideas of men on this subject, and cause a bequest to a charitable society, or a religious institution, to become the means of good to others; but let none consider that such a disposal of property ever will remove the stain which may have been contracted by fraud or violence in acquiring wealth, or by withholding more than is meet, while increasing the store. It is true,

There is a fountain fill'd with blood,  
 Drawn from Immanuel's veins,  
 And sinners plung'd beneath that flood,  
 Lose all their guilty stains;

and we are expressly told, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, 1 John i. 7; but when pardon has thus been obtained, and the heart is renewed by God the Holy Spirit, all will be devoted to the service of our Lord and Master. Not, however, by taking or withholding, contrary to the principles of the Divine law, under the idea that wealth, thus gotten by vanity, can be accepted if applied for other purposes, however laudable in themselves. Where God requires services at our hands, he will send the needful ability or property, for the purpose. Let

us seek to employ the talent committed to us in simplicity and faith, avoiding the snares into which many fall, by thinking that they are doing service to the Lord, when, in fact, they are only gratifying their own self-will, and even their corrupt inclinations. In connexion with this subject we may observe, that whatever was vowed to God, must have been obtained honestly, or it was not accepted. This is expressly stated in several passages of the sacred writings: herein was a striking contrast between the Divine law and the observances of heathenism, under which, in some cases, money was expressly acquired by infamous and sinful practices, that it might be applied to the service of idols. Even now, in heathen lands, these shameful practices exist.

The vows of execration, or devoting to destruction, called *cherem*, were solemn; they did not admit of retraction or change of purpose. The destruction of Jericho, recorded in the book of Joshua, is a remarkable example of this, and was the result of the wrath of God against the sins of the Canaanitish nations. The circumstances need not be here noticed; the reader may refer to what is said upon the subject in "THE JOURNEYS OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL." The same awful penalty was denounced against any city of Israel that should introduce the worship of false gods, Deut. xiii. 12—18. Some have thought that the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter was of this description; but the original word is different, it is *neder*, and implies resigning or giving up to the service of the Lord; not *cherem*, or destruction of the thing dedicated.

In Lev. xxvii. are the rules relating to things dedicated to God by a solemn vow. The vow of Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 20—22, was similar. Other vows were of abstinence or self-denial, as to abstain from wine, and to be scrupulously careful in some circumstances of conduct. Such was the vow of the Nazarite; see Numbers vi. There were two classes of Nazarites—those wholly devoted, often from their birth, as Samson and John the Baptist; and those for a limited period, which vows were not unfrequent on recovery from sickness, or deliverance from danger, and continued for an interval of time before sacrifices of thanks-

giving were offered. Here we may refer to Acts xviii. 18. The apostle Paul, for some reason not recorded, bound himself by a vow, in consequence of which he shaved his head, and we find him afterwards saying he must needs go to Jerusalem. He felt that it was his duty to proceed there at that time; this was also needful for the performance of his vow, for when such an engagement was made in a foreign country, the party must go to Jerusalem to perform it. We may notice the similarity of the Romish pilgrimages to this custom; but many abuses accompanied these observances in the days of our fathers, and are continued in some degree even up to the present day.

Advocates of popery refer to the vows under the Mosaic law, and to the Nazarites in particular, when they seek to defend their monastic institutions. But a slight examination of the subject will show, that even the ceremonial observances of the Mosaic law do not, in this respect, afford any sanction to the slavish restrictions and painful results of the system sanctioned by the church of Rome. There is nothing in common, between the cheerful, simple-hearted, and pious devotedness of the Hebrew votaries, such as the Rechabites, Jer. xxxv. and the victims of the Romish system; the horrors of which, even in our own times, have been very ably delineated by Blanco White, and many others. A system, by the principles of which Blanco White saw some of the intimate friends of his youth hurried "into the grossest and most daring profligacy:" while under its slavish observances he saw one sister at the age of twenty-two, slowly sink into the grave, from decaying health, the result of spiritual apprehensions and temporal privations; and bade farewell to another sister, who at the age of twenty had been induced, by the visionary representations of the Romish clergy, to leave an infirm mother to the care of servants and strangers, and to bind herself to the observance of rules which denied her the comforts enjoyed even by the lowest classes of society. Her health speedily gave way, and disease filled her conscience with fears. Her brother says, "I had often to endure the torture of witnessing her agonies at the confessional. I left her, when I quitted Spain, dying much too slowly for her only chance of relief. I wept bitterly for her loss two



years after; yet I could not be so cruel as to wish her alive." Consider this brief allusion to the horrors of the monastic vows, both in their principles and their effects, and then say, Can any one doubt whether they are the institutions of God or the inventions of man? They illustrate the statement of our Lord, that the Pharisees bound men with heavy burdens, grievous to be borne. The apostle said to his brethren, Ye are not ignorant of the devices of Satan, 2 Cor. ii. 11. Let us beware that he get no advantage over us.

This part of our subject must not be left without referring to the vow of Jonadab the son of Rechab, and the faithfulness with which his descendants observed it in the days of Jeremiah, ch. xxxv. It has been said that the Rechabites still exist, according to the Divine promise, ver. 19. Joseph Wolff relates, that one of these people, named Mousa, was pointed out to him, in 1824, while among the Yezedi, or devil worshippers, in Mesopotamia. He was wild in his appearance like an Arab, dressed in the costume usual among those children of the desert, and was standing by his horse, the bridle in his hand ready to mount. Wolff showed him the Bible in Hebrew and Arabic, and found he was acquainted with the Old Testament. On inquiring whose descendant he was, Mousa replied by turning to the book of Jeremiah, and read ch. xxxv. 5—11; and added, "We reside at Hadoram, Usal, and Mecca, in the deserts around those places. We drink no wine, and plant no vineyard, and sow no seed, and live in tents, as Jonadab our father commanded us. Hobab was our father too: come to us, you will still find 60,000 in number, and you see thus the prophecy has been fulfilled: 'Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.'" Mousa accepted the Bible, mounted his horse, and galloped off to the desert, carrying with him the word of God, and leaving behind him a striking evidence to the truth of sacred writ. Such is the account given by Joseph Wolff; and let us not forget why the Rechabites were made a sign to the prophet, or rather to the people at large. The children of Rechab obeyed the words of their father; the Jews refused to listen to the warnings

of their God, as spoken by his servants the prophets ; “ Behold, I will bring upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, all the evil that I have pronounced against them ; because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard ; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered.” Awfully indeed has this declaration been fulfilled. How shall we escape, if we, in like manner, neglect the great salvation offered to us !

The purifications connected with the worship of the Jews may be noticed here ; they were often observed by the performance of vows, as Acts xxi. 23, 24. Washings, or ablutions, are generally among the most ancient religious ceremonies of every nation ; but the simplicity of the rites of purification, directed by the Divine law, was well calculated to guard the Israelites against the use of the superstitious, and often barbarous rites practised by the heathen for lustrations. There was a washing of the whole body, used at the admission of Jewish proselytes in later times, and in some ablutions commanded by the law. There was also a pouring of water on the feet and hands, or sprinkling it. Sometimes the water was mixed with ashes of the red heifer already mentioned. In the solemn sacrifices, sprinkling the blood was an indispensable ceremony, typifying Christ’s shedding his blood for our sins, 1 Pet. i. 2. Also anointing with oil was sometimes used, as with respect to the tabernacle and its furniture, Exod. xxx. 26—28 ; but the anointing was more frequently used in consecrating or setting apart to an office, Exod. xxviii. 41. The holy oil, as Mather observes, signified the Spirit of God ; the anointing therewith, the communication of the Spirit in the saving graces, and in the Divine joys and consolations of it. Also the anointing of the priests, signified the anointing of Jesus Christ with the Spirit beyond measure, Psal. xlv. 7 ; John iii. 34. This is called the resting of the Spirit upon him, Isa. xi. 2.

We need not go into the details of the numerous cases in which washing, pouring, and sprinkling of water were enjoined. They all intimated the necessity of purity in heart and life, without which God could not be approached acceptably, either in public or private devotions. These observances, also, were conducive to the general health ;

indeed we every where find, that attention to the Divine precepts profits the body as well as the soul.

The custom of washing the hands before and after meals has always prevailed in the east; it is the more necessary from the custom of eating without knives, or forks, or spoons, or even the chopsticks used by the Chinese. But in this simple washing, as in many other matters, the later Jews added superstitious and burdensome observances to the customs of their forefathers, and the plain directions of the law. Our blessed Lord condemns the extent to which the Pharisees carried these requirements. There was to be a certain quantity of water used, and the hands and arms must be washed in a certain manner, and to a certain height; and this repeated, if not done at first exactly as was customary. Again, for some sorts of food more washings were required than for others: before bread was eaten the hands must be washed with care, but dry fruits might be eaten with unwashed hands. Many directions were given on these subjects by the Jewish doctors, and these caused our Lord's dispute with the scribes and Pharisees, Mark vii. 2—8. This law was even made a hinderance to the reading of the Bible. If a person, otherwise clean, touched any part of the Scriptures, he might not eat till he washed his hands. The reason assigned for this was, that possibly the books, which often had been laid up in secret places, might have been gnawed by mice! Surely this prohibition plainly shows what spirit dictated such rules.

So scrupulous were the Pharisees, as to these purifications, that the Jewish writers relate a story of a certain rabbi, who was imprisoned in a dungeon with a scanty allowance of food and water. One day, a part of the water being accidentally spilled, he chose to use the small quantity that remained for his washings, at the hazard of perishing with thirst, rather than to drink what was left and omit his usual purifications. Well might these observances be characterized as a yoke too heavy to be borne. These "divers washings" are censured by the apostle Paul, among other ceremonial rites to which the Jews clung with extreme pertinacity.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE SABBATH.

THE institution of the sabbath, especially manifests that the religion revealed in the Bible is of Divine origin, and proceeds from a merciful and beneficent God. The observance of this day was evidently intended for the benefit of all the descendants of Adam. The first institution of the sabbath is related in Gen. ii. 2: "On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made." Thus, under the first dispensation, the sabbath was to all mankind a commemoration of the creation, whereby the knowledge and worship of the Creator was to be maintained. Accordingly, the fourth commandment does not speak of the sabbath as a new institution, but enforces the remembrance of it as an observance already well known by the persons to whom the commandments were addressed. And we find it mentioned expressly before the delivery of the law from Sinai; see Exod. xvi. 23—26. There is no positive mention of the observance of the sabbath by the patriarchs, but as they must have known that God had blessed and sanctified it, so they must have known that it was to be observed by them, as a day of sacred rest and meditation. There is, also, in Gen. viii. 10, 12, a mention of the seventh day, in a manner which shows it was observed by Noah with some peculiar solemnity. The words of Moses, Exod. xvi. 23, before the giving of the law of the ten commandments, evidently show that the sabbath was considered holy to the Lord among the descendants of the patriarchs; and, ver. 19, speaking of the sabbath as a gift from the Lord, may refer to the new situation in which the Israelites were then placed by their God, in this respect. We may readily suppose, that the day of rest had been taken from them during their Egyptian bondage, but that at the going forth from Egypt, it was again placed within their power; and the giving of

the manna was so regulated as not to interfere with this merciful institution. Also the observance of a seventh day has been traced among almost every heathen nation, which shows that it must have been derived from one source common to all, before the dispersion of mankind; and this traces it up at once to Noah and his immediate descendants. It appears from Homer and from Hesiod, two of the most ancient of the heathen writers, that one day in seven was accounted more holy than the rest.

Among the Jews, the observance of the sabbath was enforced by an additional motive. This day of rest, not only reminded them of the Creator and the work of creation, Exod. xxxi. 14, but of their bondage in Egypt, their hard servitude and deliverance, and of Him who brought them from thence by the strong arm of his power, Dent. v. 15. To the Christian there is a consideration still more forcible :

This is the day when Christ arose  
So early from the dead ;  
This is the day when Jesus broke  
The bonds of death and hell.

The remembrance of the resurrection of our Saviour, reminds us, both of the new creation of the believer in Him, and of his painful sufferings and glorious triumph. And we are expressly told, by the apostle, that it is a type or representation of the rest that remaineth for the people of God. Let these considerations be duly impressed upon the mind, and the privilege and importance of observing the sabbath day to keep it holy will be admitted and acted upon.

The law respecting the sabbath day is as follows, in Exodus and in Deuteronomy :

EXOD. XX. 8—11.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work : but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God : in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor

thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates : for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

## DEUT. V. 12—15.

Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle,

nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out hence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.

The following additional sanction, or confirmation, of the observance of the sabbath, is in Exod. xxxi. 14—17: "Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed."

From these injunctions we learn what were the observances God commanded respecting this holy day. It was to be held sacred, for a day of holy assembling together, and commemorating the finishing of the works of creation, and the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. Thus it perpetually cautioned against idolatry. On every returning sabbath the thoughts of the Jews were directed to the Supreme Being; who, existing eternally, infinite in his perfections, and the Creator of the universe, alone deserved their praise, their reverence and worship. The sabbath was to be a time for public worship, and that evidently was spiritual worship. We twice find the precept, "Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary," Lev. xxix. 30; xxvi. 2. It was to be a day of rest, both for man and beast, that their bodily strength

might be recruited. They were therefore religiously to abstain from all work which could be done on any other day. It was unlawful to gather the manna, Exod. xvi. 22—30, or to light a fire for cooking, Exod. xxxv. 3; Numb. xv. 32. In those countries fire was not necessary for any other purpose. They were also forbidden to sow or to reap, Exod. xxxiv. 21. These were all the injunctions as to the *letter* of the manner in which the sabbath was to be kept holy. The *spirit* in which it should be observed is very plainly stated, Isa. lviii. 13, 14; “If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” Nor can we easily conceive a more pleasing sight, than that of a parent, after the labour of six days, resting at home with his family around him, in the quiet and holy enjoyment of the day. See them together attending the public worship of the Lord, joining in the praises and prayers offered there, listening with attention to the glad tidings of the gospel and the precepts of holy writ; see them at home, in affectionate intercourse and profitable conversation, or studying the word of God, and the works of holy men who have written in the same spirit. See other parts of the holy day devoted to visits of mercy, or the instruction of the young, or to quiet meditation; then say, not only which is most in conformity to the will of God, but which is best for man—such “holy pleasures” as just described, or the occupations to which “the man of the world” devotes this day?

The “Sunday pleasures” of the worldling may differ according to his rank, his taste, and his circumstances; just so the pebble on our pathway differs from the sculptured marble; but what nourishment can the body derive from the pebble or from the statue? what good can the soul derive either from the drunken orgies of the gin-shop,

or the frivolities of Sunday visiting and the fashionable promenade? And examine the real character of the Sunday pleasures of the mere worldling; we shall find them all the same in substance, when divested of the outward circumstances of place and station. What are these pleasures but the indulgence of sloth, the pampering of bodily lusts and appetites, involving the exhaustion of strength in sensual pursuits? especially, they all have one common feature in producing a desire to put away every thought of hereafter. The offers of mercy, and the denunciations of wrath, are alike neglected. Those who pursue them feel no desire for the joys of heaven; they seek to forget for a few moments the pains of hell!

Such are the *essentials* of "Sunday pleasuring," whether of the nobles of the land or of the lowest mechanics, if they are among those who try to forget God, and say unto him, "Be thou far from us." What then shall be said to the infidels who strive to hinder all who would promote the peaceful holy enjoyment of this day, and refuse to protect the humble follower of the Lord from those who interfere with his lawful rest on the sabbath? Our blessed Lord says of all men, "By their fruits ye shall know them." The first physicians of our day state, that unremitting exertions, whether in what is called labour, or in what is miscalled pleasure, will speedily destroy the bodily strength, and hurry the victim to the grave. Shall we account men philanthropists, who, in fact, promote the destruction of their fellow men, by not allowing even that degree of restraint which, leaving every one free as to himself, would only keep him from injuring others? Surely it is clear with whose children such characters must be included. Let every one then promote those measures which secure to man the liberty to worship God, and only restrain him from doing things which would interfere with the religious privileges and liberties of his neighbours. Maimonides says, "The sabbath is evidently designed to procure rest for man, by providing that a seventh part of his life shall be free from labour and fatigue, of which no one, either rich or poor, shall be deprived." Alas, how



many, called Christians, refuse, not only to take this rest themselves, but also to allow others to enjoy it!

We have seen what were the positive enactments with respect to the observance of the Jewish sabbath; but it is evident, from many passages in Scripture, that this day was not usually kept holy to the Lord as it should have been. There were many who considered it a burden, because it debarred them from their usual pursuits; who, as Amos states, viii. 5, longed for the time when the sabbath should be gone, that they might continue their fraudulent traffic; or, as Isaiah denounces, “sought their own pleasure” on that day. How similar are the evil desires and the evil practices of men in every age! After the captivity, more attention was paid to the outward observance; and Nehemiah, x. xiii., particularly the latter chapter, shows the active measures taken by that ruler, to hinder the people of the land from compelling, or inducing the Jews to break the sabbath by trading, as well as to prevent the Jews themselves from pursuing their ordinary labours on that holy day. But it is possible to err by going into one extreme as well as another; it was so with the Jews. Before the captivity, the sabbath was neglected, Neh. xiii. 18, afterwards the outward observance became superstitious. When the Maccabees first took up arms against their oppressors, the Jews carried their observance of the sabbath so far, as to allow their enemies to attack and massacre them without resistance on that day; but Mattathias explained to his countrymen that this could not be right, and from that time the Jews fought in their own defence on the sabbath, although they would not on that day attack their foes. In more than one instance their enemies took advantage of this forbearance: as late as the time of Pompey, that Roman general took Jerusalem by pushing forward the works of the siege on the sabbath; on that day placing his engines, and battering the walls in places which could not have been approached had the Jews fought against him.

In the days when our blessed Lord was upon earth, the privileges of the sabbath were so lost, under the ceremonial additions of the Pharisees, that Christ, as Lord of the

sabbath, openly showed his disregard of these traditional innovations, and reverted to the simple and merciful design of the institution, declaring that the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath, Mark ii. 27, 28; Luke vi. 5.

Let us now see how the Jews kept their ceremonial sabbath in the days of our Saviour; considerable information will be obtained thereby relative to several circumstances in the gospel history. About three on the Friday afternoon began what was called the eve, or the preparation for the sabbath, Mark xv. 42. The people ceased from their daily labour and usual employments, and prepared food for the next day, as no fire ought then to be kindled; they trimmed their beards, and washed their faces, hands, and feet; this the rabbis called "meeting king sabbath." A little before sunset they lighted what was called the sabbath candle, and the interval, from sunset till three stars were plainly visible, was called "between the suns," as they were in doubt to which day it belonged. Whoever found that he had inadvertently done any work in that space, was bound to bring a sin-offering. The reader will recollect that, in Judea, the time of sunset did not vary so much as in more northern countries, and the approach of darkness is more rapid and decided. This plan of reckoning the day, from one evening to the next, was the custom at that time, being founded on the statement, Gen. i., that the evening and the morning made the first day, and so on. We are not called to adopt this plan now; and the quiet entire change produced by a night's rest is an important separation between the days of labour and the sabbath. From midnight to midnight is as correct a measure of time; still it is desirable that Saturday evening should not present such a hurried bustling scene as it does in many families. It is well then to consider, that

Safely through another week,  
 God has brought us on our way,  
 Let us now a blessing seek,  
 On the' approaching sabbath day:  
 Day of all the week the best!  
 Emblem of eternal rest!

To return to the Jews. When the sabbath began they

placed food on the table, better than their usual provision, also the sabbath lamp. The master of the house took a cup of wine, and after repeating Gen. ii. 1—3, drank it. The rest of the family did the same, and, after washing their hands, began supper. With respect to the lights for the sabbath, one rabbi says, "He that is accustomed to take great care in trimming his sabbath lamp well, will have children who shall be disciples of the wise:" the having a handsome sabbath lamp was represented to be as necessary as providing food. A heathen Roman poet alludes to these customary lights, and the attempts to provide a supper more sumptuous than ordinary, in the following lines,

—But Herod's feast returns!—

Now lamps with violet deck'd in rows depend,  
And from each window greasy clouds ascend.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now the red dish within its circling rim,  
Beholds the tail of some poor tunny swim.

Now the white earthen vessel swims with wine.

After returning thanks, the family retired to rest. Early the next morning they attended the first service at the synagogue, or perhaps at the temple, if they lived in Jerusalem; and on their return home took their breakfast, which was the second sabbath meal. They then went to some teacher who publicly explained the traditions of the elders, or they engaged in religious duties at home. At noon they dined, and the afternoon passed away till the time of the evening sacrifice, about three o'clock, when they again went to the temple, or to a synagogue; after which they returned home to eat their fourth meal, and continued conversing till sunset, when the sabbath ended. Just before that time, a second sabbath lamp was lighted, and the master of the family having given thanks over a cup of wine, he repeated a passage of Scripture, as Psa. cxvi. 13, or Esther viii. 16, and pronounced a blessing, by way of separation between the sabbath and the working day, then about to begin. The chief circumstance to be noticed as objectionable in these observances, is that on the sabbath the Jews made a point of indulging in food, and invited company more than on any other day; see Luke xiv. 1. It is not to be a day of abstinence or fasting, but certainly it should not be a day of gluttony and feasting.

The sabbath was to be strictly a day of rest, except for works of necessity or mercy. That public notice might be given, the minister of the synagogue sounded a trumpet six times from the roof of the building, at the beginning and at the end of the sabbath. Still further to make it a day of rest, the Jews were forbidden to walk more than a sabbath day's journey, a distance of 2,000 cubits, or something less than a mile. This limitation is not found anywhere in Scripture, but the Jews founded the tradition on Exod. xvi. 29, "Let no man go out of his place on the sabbath day." They consider that the distance at first was twelve miles, that being the extent they assign to the camp in the wilderness, but that after the settlement in the land of Canaan, it was restricted to the shorter distance.

The restrictions of the later Jews with respect to the sabbath day, were numerous, fanciful, and very burdensome. For instance, they enumerated thirty-nine "primitive" or general kind of works, from which they made out innumerable others as "derivatives." To plough was a primitive; to dig was likewise forbidden, but was a derivative; to reap was a primitive; to gather ears of corn was of the same nature as reaping, and so was to pluck fruit. If it was proved that any one had broken these rules presumptuously, he was in danger of being stoned; our Lord therefore, in fact, pleaded for the lives of his disciples, Matt. xii. 1—8. The minute points to which these rules were extended, and the fanciful classification of them, can scarcely be supposed; for instance, to chop herbs was considered the same as grinding. The distinctions as to healing were also very strict. It was lawful to resort to means necessary to save life, but if the disease was of a chronical nature, it was to be endured on that day, rather than prepare medicines or attempt a cure on the sabbath. Our Lord cured the blind man on the sabbath day, not only showing his miraculous power in using means improper according to human reason, but also such as directly opposed the Jewish traditions.

Maimonides, in his writings, gives the following decisions on this point: "Let not those that are in health use physic on the sabbath day. Let not him that labours under a pain in his loins anoint the place affected with

oil and vinegar, but with oil he may if it is not oil of roses; nor is it lawful to rub any part so as to rub the skin off! He that has the toothe-ache let him not take vinegar into his mouth to spit it out again, but he may to swallow it. He that has a sore throat let him not gargle it with oil, but he may swallow down the oil, whence if he receive a cure it is well. Let no man chew mastich or rub his teeth with spice for a cure, but if he does this to make his mouth taste sweet it is allowed. They do not put wine into a sore eye. They do not apply fomentations or oils to any affected part." The rules for using physic are very numerous, and show what foolish nostrums were latterly in use among the Jews. Many are such that it was well to be restrained from using them at any time. The regulations of the Mishna, respecting the sabbath, make us wonder how such enactments could have been made by rational beings. Thus, a man might break a barrel to get dried figs out of it to eat on the sabbath, but he must not bore a hole in it for that purpose. The evasions were numerous. One man might not do any forbidden work alone, but if two joined in doing it then it often became lawful. If any food had been warmed on the eve of the sabbath it might be heated again. A man might ask his neighbour to give him wine, but not to lend it to him, as that might tempt the lender to make a written memorandum on the sabbath. One other case may be related. If a house had two balconies on different stories, projecting out that the inhabitants might draw up water out of a well in an open court beneath, and the bucket passed through a hole in the lower balcony when drawn to the upper one, they might not use it on the sabbath, unless an inclosure ten palms high was made round the mouth of the well, or reaching downwards from the lower balcony. What must have been the state of a people, where similar regulations without number were enforced, or even devised!

The stricter Jews did not allow even the pulling out a beast or sheep from a pit, though it was not condemned by the teachers as unlawful; see Matt. xii. 11. They thought it enough to bring food and fodder to the place, unless there was danger from its remaining there. Christ's question to

the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, had reference, not to his desiring to be healed—that he had shown by lying there so long; but the inquiry was, whether he would be healed on the sabbath; thus ascertaining whether he was blindly superstitious, like the pharisaical rulers.

Another class of limitations affected the removal of things. They might not carry a burden on the sabbath, but they might remove articles from one place to another. Our Lord's directions to the man at Bethesda, to take up his bed and go to his house, was plainly in opposition to these unscriptural limitations. It was both a trial to the man's faith, and an open opposition to the Jewish superstitious observances. Hereby also a preparation was made for the change of the sabbath, from the seventh to the first day of the week.

One method of observance, by which the later Jews broke the sabbath while they pretended to be strict in observing it—their feasting on that day—has already been alluded to. The extent to which they proceeded in this respect appears from many passages in the Jewish writings. One of their rabbis is said to have bought flesh from thirteen butchers, that he might be able to select the very best; another seated himself upon an ivory seat, to blow the fire for warming his dinner, thus thinking that he honoured the sabbath, although the precept was express, that no fire should be kindled on that day. Lightfoot notices these customs in reference to the statement, Luke xiv. 1, "that Christ was feasted in the house of a Pharisee on the sabbath, when he healed the dropsical man." But the interpretation given by the Jewish writers, to Isa. lviii. 13, "Thou shalt call the sabbath a delight," is a sufficient proof of the dreadful extent to which these blasphemous practices (for such they may be called) were carried. They blasphemously said, "We must live more delicately on the sabbath than on other days; and he is highly to be commended who provides the most delicious fare against that day. He that feasts thrice on the sabbath shall be delivered from the calamities suffered by the Messiah, from the judgment of hell, and from the war of Gog and Magog!" Too often, indeed, do nominal Christians make the sabbath a day of surfeiting and drunkenness; and others, though not going to this extent, yet on

that day plainly show that “their god is their belly,” Phil. iii. 19. How few of these are aware, that they are therein following the examples of the wicked among the Jews! Thus the Jews departed from the original design of this sacred institution, which had four ends in view: moral, to rest from labour; commemorative, to remember God’s creating the world; evangelical, as referring to Christ; and typical, signifying eternal rest. Yes, it is the Christian’s desire on the sabbath, that

Every thought should be directed  
 Heavenward, through this hallow’d day;  
 Worldly themes should be rejected,  
 Themes that draw the soul away:  
 ’Tis the day of sacred rest.  
 ’Tis the day the Lord has blest.  
 Why should we grow weary thinking  
 Of the Saviour’s grace and love?  
 From these springs his people drinking,  
 Get a taste of joys above:  
 Oh ’tis good the Lord to know!  
 ’Tis our heaven begun below.

The quaint lines of Herbert, on the same subject are very expressive and beautiful.

The Sundays of man’s life,  
 Threaded together on time’s string,  
 Make bracelets to adorn the wife  
 Of the eternal glorious King.  
 On Sunday, heaven’s gate stands ope;  
 Blessings are plentiful and rife;  
 More plentiful than hope.

This day my Saviour rose,  
 And did enclose this light for his;  
 That, as each beast his manger knows,  
 Man might not of the fodder miss.  
 Christ hath took in this piece of ground,  
 And made a garden there, for those  
 Who want herbs for their wound.

Many excellent works have been written on keeping the sabbath holy, but there is none more deserving attention than a little treatise on the sabbath by Dwight.\* He answers very ably the objections raised against the sabbath observances, both by unbelievers and by some,

\* Published by the Religious Tract Society, price 4d.

who, though defenders of the truths of Christianity, have adopted erroneous notions respecting the institution of the sabbath. He also satisfactorily answers the inquiry why the day for its observance has been changed. He shows that the day might be altered by Divine appointment, without altering the substance of the institution. As the Jewish sabbath especially commemorated the creation, and the deliverance from Egypt, so the Christian sabbath commemorates the greater work of the new creation, and the completion of the work of redemption, whereby believers are delivered from a worse than Egyptian slavery. The sabbath itself is unchanged. It still returns at the end of seven days. It is still a memorial of the creation. But the institution is enlarged, to commemorate also the work of redemption, for which observance the first day of the week was most suitable, after the resurrection of Christ. The duty and the blessing are stated in the fourth commandment to apply, not to the *seventh* day but to the *sabbath* day. The 118th Psalm has been considered to contain a direct prediction, that the day of Christ's resurrection was to be the day on which the sabbath should be holden under the gospel. There is sufficient evidence from the Acts, and especially from Rev. i. 10, that the first day of the week was observed by the apostles as the Christian sabbath. The early fathers are particular in enjoining the observance of this day instead of the Jewish sabbath. And, may we not ask, Is it possible to suppose that God has suffered his church to disuse and annihilate his own institution, and to substitute one of human devising in its stead? The peculiar blessings which have resulted to millions of souls, from the observance of the Lord's day as the sabbath, are too manifest for us to hesitate as to what is the will of God on this subject. Dwight well says, "Take this day from the calendar of the Christian, and all that remains will be cloudy and cheerless. Religion will instantly decay; ignorance, error, and vice will immediately triumph; the sense of duty vanish, morals fade away, the acknowledgment, and even the remembrance of God be far removed from mankind; the glad tidings of salvation cease to sound, and the communication between earth and heaven be cut off for ever."



## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE SABBATICAL YEAR—THE JUBILEE—THE NEW MOONS.

THE sabbatical year was an ordinance in the law given by Moses, and had reference to the institution of the sabbath. As the sabbath of the seventh day was a day of rest for man and beast, so the sabbatical year was a time of rest for the land, which, during every seventh year, was to lie fallow, or remain uncultivated. What was produced without tillage or pruning was to be left common for all, especially for the poor and for the cattle, Exod. xxiii. 11; Lev. xxv. 1—22. But the Jews were not to pass their time in idleness during this year. They could fish, and pursue the wild beasts, repair their buildings and furniture, and carry on manufactures and commerce. They also were more employed in devotional services this year, when the whole law was to be publicly read, Dent. xxxi. 10—13. To prevent any suffering from famine, in consequence of this adherence to the Divine command, God promised an unusual supply every sixth year. This remarkable institution was a trial of the faith of the Jews, and of their reliance on a particular Providence, and it was a special mark of that government under which the Israelites were placed when they settled in the promised land; a government which acknowledged the Lord for their King, and considered him as present among them in a peculiar manner. It created and strengthened a sense of dependence on God, and charity towards man, reminding them that Jehovah was Lord of the soil, and that they held it only from his bounty. We find, in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21, that the neglect of this law is mentioned particularly among the national sins which caused the captivity; and the length of the captivity, seventy years, is stated as compensating the land, by giving it a period of rest equal to that during which the Jews had defrauded it of its sabbaths. If we calculate by the whole term of this period, it would lead

us to conclude that the observance of the sabbatical year was wholly neglected soon after the land was governed by kings. Samuel, indeed, expressly told the people, that their desire for a king was a direct renouncing of Jehovah as their King and Ruler; and we may conclude, that all institutions which especially regarded the Lord as their immediate Sovereign would then be neglected. Another date, however, is assigned by Prideaux. He reckons only the fifty-two years which elapsed between the destruction of Jerusalem and the return of the Jews, during which period the land was wholly desolated. This gives a period of 364 years, and goes back to an early part of the reign of Asa.

After the return from captivity the sabbatical years were better observed, although this was rendered more difficult by the insecurity of property, and the foreign tribute the land was then under. But Josephus mentions, that exemption from taxes during the sabbatical years, was obtained from Alexander, and afterwards from the Roman emperors.

The seventh year was a year of release from debts, or at least they were not then to be collected; and the personal servitude into which any Hebrew had fallen then ended. The laws respecting this freedom are very remarkable, showing the kind and merciful spirit of the Mosaic law, and taking away the most severe features of the slavery at that time generally prevalent. Nothing can be more opposite in spirit than the servitude permitted to exist among the Hebrews, and that of modern slavery. It is indeed time that every nation, professing to be Christian, should follow the example of England, and abolish that slavery, which is among the worst remains of heathenism, and which especially is opposed to every principle of the Protestant faith.

It is not quite certain, whether servitude among the Jews ended in every sabbatical year, or whether the service terminated at the end of six years from its commencement. But an express law directed that servants should not be sent away without some provision from the produce of the soil, or the cattle they had assisted to raise; and another law, providing for the continuance

of their servitude during life, *if such was their own wish*, further shows that the bondage was not intended to be bitter or severe. The remarkable laws respecting this servitude, and the release from it, will be found in Exod. xxi. Lev. xxv. Deut. xv. and the reader is particularly recommended to read these passages carefully. It has been well asked, Could there be an infidel in such a land, or a sinner against God and his own soul, with such proofs before his eyes, of God and his attributes, as one sabbatical year afforded?

The "solemnity of the year of release" was marked at its conclusion, by the public reading of the law, from a pulpit in the court of the women, during the feast of tabernacles. The Jewish traditions relate the ceremonial with which this was accompanied; and that, in the later times, the whole law was not read by the ruler, but the following portions, Deut. i. to vi. 4; xi. 13—22; xiv. 22; xxix. 2. Seven prayers were then recited. It is related, that when Agrippa read the passage, Deut. xvii. 15, forbidding the setting a stranger as king over the people, his eyes were filled with tears on remembering that he was of Gentile extraction, but the people comforted him, calling out that he was their brother.

The year of jubilee was connected with the sabbatical year. It was celebrated every fiftieth year, and was to be observed by letting the land rest in that year also; consequently, at the jubilee there would be two years following, in which the people would depend for support upon the especial provision promised by Divine Providence, Lev. xxv. 20—22. The only passage of Scripture which is supposed to refer to this provision, is 2 Kings xix. 29.

The year of jubilee began on the day of expiation, and was notified by the solemn sounding of trumpets throughout the land; whence some suppose the name of jubilee is derived; others consider that the word denotes, "to bring back," or, "liberty." The Jews on the coast of Malabar told Buchanan, that when their fathers settled in that land, after the destruction of the second temple, they brought with them the two silver trumpets used at the jubilee. There were two such trumpets kept in most of the

considerable towns of Judæa. In this year all lands or houses, in the country, which had been sold or alienated, were to be returned to the families that originally possessed them; a provision evidently intended to preserve that middle state, as to property, which is most conducive to human happiness. Ezekiel, xlv. 16—18, extends this to royal grants. In this year, also, all the poor Israelites, who, although not sold as slaves, had engaged themselves and their families as servants, returned into the possession of their paternal inheritance. Never was there any people so secured as the Israelites, both as to their property and as to their personal liberty.

It has been well observed, that no lawgiver would have ventured to propose such laws, had there not been the fullest conviction, on his own part and that of the people, that a peculiar Providence would facilitate its execution. And it was the want of faith in that peculiar Providence, which led to the neglect of this solemn observance, and from thence to further ruinous evils.

We may imagine the joy which would re-echo through the land, when, on the evening of the solemn day of atonement, the sound of the silver trumpet was heard in every town, announcing the commencement of this auspicious period. How beautiful the following sketch, of one of the families liberated at the jubilee, returning to their paternal home!

The freedom-freighted blast through all the land  
At once in every city, echoing rings :—  
Free is the bondman now, each one returns  
To his inheritance. The man grown old  
In servitude far from his native fields,  
Hastes joyous on his way ; no hills are steep,  
Smooth is each rugged path ; his little ones  
Sport as they go, while oft the mother chides  
Their lingering step, lured by the way-side flowers.  
At length the hill, from which a farewell look,  
And still another parting look, he cast  
On his paternal vale, appears in view.  
The summit gain'd, throbs hard his heart with joy  
And sorrow blent, to see that vale once more.  
Instant his eager eye darts to the roof  
Where first he saw the light : his youngest born

He lifts, and pointing to the much-loved spot,  
 Says, "There thy fathers lived, and there they sleep."  
 Onward he goes, near and more near he draws :  
 How sweet the tinkle of the palm-bower'd brook !  
 The sun-beam slanting through the cedar grove !  
 How lovely, and how mild ! but lovelier still  
 The welcome in the eye of ancient friends,  
 Scarce known at first : and dear the fig-tree shade,  
 'Neath which on sabbath eve his father told  
 Of Israel from the house of bondage freed,  
 Led through the desert to the promised land.  
 With eager arms the aged stem he clasps,  
 And with his tears the furrow'd bark bedews ;  
 And still at midnight-hour, he thinks he hears  
 The blissful sound that brake the bondman's chains,  
 The glorious peal of freedom and of joy ! *Grahame.*

Shall not we consider this a lively emblem of the gospel, declaring to all the acceptable year of the Lord, Isa. lx. 1, 2. It is to be regretted that the poet just quoted has not noticed how the joy of a believing Israelite set free by the jubilee, would be heightened by the remembrance that his liberation was introduced by the day of expiation or atonement, in which freedom from spiritual bondage was both sought and commemorated.

Jesus, our great High Priest,  
 Hath full atonement made ;  
 Ye weary spirits rest ;  
 Ye mournful souls be glad.  
 The year of jubilee is come ;  
 Return, ye ransom'd sinners, home.

Hales considers that Luke iv. 18, 19, is an evidence that our Lord began his public ministry in a year of jubilee.

It has been noticed, that the sabbatical year, and the year of jubilee, were especially institutions of mercy to the poorer Israelites ; and we must again remark, how much consideration towards them was manifested in every part of the Mosaic law. This is no slight proof of its Divine origin. Let any one read these enactments, or only refer to the passages, Lev. xiv. 21 ; xix. 10, 15 ; xxv. 25—47 ; Deut. xv. 7—18, and say whether the Divine law is not infinitely superior to every code of heathen laws, and to all the counsels of pagan philosophers. Deut. xv. 11, is

a very remarkable passage. All the provisions of the Mosaic law were calculated to maintain the people at large in a happy state, being neither exalted by riches, nor ground down by poverty; yet we read the positive declaration, that "the poor shall never cease out of the land," accompanied with the plain precept, "Therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thy hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land." Is it not evident, that the constant occasions that exist for the exercise of charity to the poor, are designed that our hearts should not grow cold, nor be hardened to any of our Christian affections and duties? The text, Prov. xiv. 31, contains a striking warning; "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor."

The new moons, or first days of every month, were observed with peculiar solemnities; see Numb. xxviii. Additional sacrifices were then offered, comprising burnt, sin, meat, and drink-offerings; and trumpets were sounded during the oblations, Psa. lxxxi. 3. The new moons, also, were seasons on which the pious Israelites resorted to the prophets and public teachers to hear the word of God, 2 Kings iv. 23; Isa. lxvi. 23; Ezek. xlvi. 1; Amos viii. 5. From what passed between David and Jonathan, 1 Sam. xx. 5, 18, the new moon appears to have been observed as a public festival. This period is regarded by the modern Jews, who bless God for having created the moon, and for having renewed her to teach the Israelites that they ought to become new creatures.

Connected with this observance was the annual festival of the feast of trumpets, so called from the solemn sounding of the trumpets on that occasion, Lev. xxiii. 24; Numb. xxix. 1: see page 179. It is called a memorial of the blowing of trumpets, but it is not easy to tell of what it was a memorial. Patrick considers that it was a memorial of the creation of the world, wherefore the ancient beginning of the year was dated from that time. It was on the first day of the moon, in the autumnal month Tizri, consequently on the first day of the civil year; but it was the seventh month, according to the way of reckoning the ecclesiastical year,

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and some suppose that it was honoured by this feast as a sabbatical month. All servile work was forbidden, a holy convocation of the people assembled on this day, and additional sacrifices were offered. In the later times of the Jewish state, three forms of public benediction were read, blessing God as the author of the seasons. After each benediction, three short portions or verses from the law, and as many from the psalms or prophets were read, concluding with another from the law; and in the temple the Levites sang the 81st Psalm. Thus the feast of the new moons was held as sanctifying each month, and the feast of trumpets sanctified each year, and reminded the Israelites that their times were in God's hands. The later Jews connected the observance of this day with a superstitious belief, that God then sits in judgment on the actions of men, and that records are made accordingly in a book of life for the just, a book of death for the wicked, and a book of a middle state for those not very good nor very bad: upon such an unscriptural idea it is unnecessary to offer any remarks. Maimonides, a Jewish writer, after stating that the good and bad deeds of a man are balanced against each other on this day, adds the following useful exhortation: "The blowing of the trumpet on the new year's day is an ordinance of Scripture, and there is intimation in it as saying, Ye sleepers, awake from your sleep; and ye who are in a deep sleep, arise from your deep sleep; search into your actions, turn with repentance, and remember your Creator. Ye who have become forgetful of truth by pursuing vain and temporary things, and have been absorbed the whole year in vain and idle matters, which can neither avail nor deliver you, look after your souls, amend your manners and your deeds; and may every one of you forsake his wicked ways and his ungodly thoughts."

The beginnings of the months and years were not settled by a regular calculation, but by the actual appearance of the new moon. Persons were appointed to watch on the tops of the mountains for its first appearance after the change. As soon as they saw it, they informed the sanhedrim, and public notice was given through the land. This notice at first was given by lighting fires upon the



high places; but as the Samaritans sometimes caused deceptions by making false fires, latterly the notice was given by messengers, in the seven months in which the most important festivals occurred. But if the moon was not seen on the night following the thirtieth day, they made the next day the first of the following month. Hence there was sometimes a difference of a day as to the beginning of a month; and persons came forward who had seen the new moon when the watchers had not observed it: whence, at times, disputes arose as to the proper day for the great festivals, particularly the passover; and the sanhedrim latterly commanded that the first statement should be followed, and not corrected, even if other evidence proved it to be wrong.

We must not pass from this account of the solemn sounding of the trumpets, without having our attention called to that great and solemn day “when the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised,” 1 Cor. xv. 52. To this awful moment perhaps these soundings of the trumpets were intended to have particular reference.

Great God! what do I see and hear,  
The end of thing, created!  
Behold the Judge of man appear,  
On clouds of glory seated!  
The trumpet sounds! the graves restore  
The dead, which they contain'd before!  
PREPARE, MY SOUL, TO MEET HIM!



## CHAPTER XIX.

## THE PROPHETS.

THERE is not in Scripture a precise account of the prophets and the schools of the prophets, but many circumstances are mentioned respecting them. The prophets were not a regularly constituted order or succession of men, but were raised up as God saw fit, to perform sacred and important duties. The gift of prophecy was not confined to the tribe of Levi; there were prophets from all the tribes, and even sometimes among the Gentiles, as Balaam; though, when evil men were employed as prophets, it was only for a limited time, and with reference to some particular message. At first the prophets were called seers, 1 Sam. ix. 9; 2 Sam. xv. 27, from the discoveries made to them of things to come. They declared the will of God, and delivered the Divine messages committed to them, both to kings and people, with a freedom which showed that they knew they were the authorized messengers of Jehovah. But their office did not relate to future events only; it was their duty to instruct the people, and interpret the law or word of God, Neh. viii. In many texts, prophet means interpreter or teacher, and prophecy means interpretation or teaching. The solemn warnings in Ezek. xxxiii. show that the prophets were preachers in the general acceptance of the term, and especially to warn persons of the evil of sin. The words of the prophets also confirmed the Mosaic ritual, and thus drew a wide distinction, in practice as well as in doctrine, between the Hebrews and the surrounding idolaters. Even to the Gentiles, the Mosaic ritual and the prophecies were mutual confirmations of each other, or rather the regular observance of the first, strengthened the latter in their views; both led to the crucified Saviour, who was given for a covenant of the people, (the Jews,) and a light of the Gentiles, Isa. xlii. 6.

There were many prophets or seers whose names are not noticed in Scripture, and some are mentioned, none

of whose prophecies are recorded. Both Jews and Christians agree that Malachi was the last of the prophets under the Old Testament dispensation; and it has been observed, that while there were prophets among them, the Jews were not divided by sects or heresies. The prophets being divinely inspired, the people had to receive their declarations, or were conscious that they rejected the word and authority of Jehovah, and when they did so they fell into idolatry. But when the law of God was interpreted by uninspired men, liable to error, and often disagreeing in their opinions, differences and disputes were the natural consequence, then divisions and parties followed.

The schools of the prophets are supposed to have arisen about the time of Eli, and probably were instituted to instruct persons for the sacred ministry, in consequence of the degraded and wicked state into which the priesthood had then fallen, as is exemplified in the account of the conduct of Eli's sons. The Levite engaged by Micah, *Judg. xvii.*, who could unite the worship of a graven image and a molten image with the service of Jehovah, probably was but one among many who then sought the priest's office for the sake of a livelihood. The disciples, or young persons taught in these schools, were called sons of the prophets. Some venerable, divinely inspired prophet presided, who was called their father, and the younger disciples ministered to him. Samuel, (*1 Sam. xix. 20.*) Elijah, and Elisha, were among these fathers. The sons of the prophets lived together as a community, and subsisted on the labour of their hands, assisted by the contributions of those who knew the value of these institutions, and were able to help in supporting them. In *2 Kings iv.* and *vi.* are some interesting particulars respecting these communities, which evidently were both in spirit and in practice widely different from the monastic institutions of the church of Rome. The instruction in these schools was the study of the Divine law, and the principles of their faith; also psalmody, and lecturing or preaching. And in these services, doubtless, the sons of the prophets, and their superintendents, were much employed, as we find people resorted to them at stated seasons. *2 Kings iv. 23.* Singing

the praises of God is also called prophesying, 1 Chron. xxv. 1; 1 Sam. x. 5, 10. Thus the sons of the prophets were prepared for scenes of active usefulness. From these institutions most of the prophets appear to have been called; for Amos, who was a herdsman, speaks of his call as uncommon, vii. 14. Observe, however, that the priest of Bethel did not deny the inspiration of Amos, or his right to prophecy, but only wished to prevent him from prophesying or preaching at court. The plain truths and warnings against sin, which fell from the lips of this divinely inspired, but rustic prophet, grated upon courtly ears, accustomed to smooth language and deceitful statements.

A prophet, in the strictest sense of the word, was one to whom the knowledge of secret things was revealed, that he might declare them to others. The Jewish writers since Christ, enumerate forty-eight of these prophets, and seven prophetesses, from Abraham to Malachi. In this number they include Eldad and Medad, Numb. xi. 26, though there is nothing to show that they did more than exhort; nor does it appear that their gifts differed from those of the other seventy elders. And they now omit Daniel, evidently because he prophesied clearly of the coming of the Messiah. His title to be ranked among the prophets cannot be disputed; and Josephus, who lived soon after our Lord was upon earth, expressly speaks of Daniel as one of the most eminent of their prophets.

We do not find that any regular form or ceremony was used when a prophet was constituted, or sent forth. The casting of Elijah's mantle upon Elisha, 1 Kings xix. 19, may be regarded rather as a sign than as a ceremony; and, from the repeated mention of that mantle, we may suppose there was something peculiar to Elijah in his dress and appearance. He is described, 2 Kings, i. 8, as hairy, or wearing a hairy garment, girt with a girdle of leather; the appearance of John the Baptist was similar, Matt. iii. 4. As to the method by which the prophets were designated, or marked out for their office, we only read that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and all the true prophets mentioned in

Scripture evidently had the witness of the Spirit, carrying them forth to the discharge of their office, and strengthening them for it. Their qualifications also are plainly stated. The true prophet was a man of piety. His mind, when receiving the Divine impulse, was in a well regulated state, not carried away or influenced by disorderly passions. Thus, when Elisha's mind was disturbed by the sight of Jehoram, the wicked king of Israel, he called for a minstrel, whose sacred harmony might compose his mind before he sought the Lord, 2 Kings iii. 15. Maimonides says that the prophets were not able to prophesy just when they wished to do so, but were obliged to prepare their minds, and to sit down joyfully, cheerfully, and solitarily; seeing that prophecy dwells neither amidst melancholy nor amidst apathy, but amidst joyfulness, therefore the sons of the prophets used to have instruments of music, and thus sought after prophecy.

The Divine revelations to the prophets were made in various ways. 1. By dreams and visions. Thus, to Jacob, Daniel, and others: this is also alluded to, Joel ii. 28. St. Peter's trance, Acts x., was of this nature. The term vision sometimes is applied to a really visible and miraculous appearance, as that of the angel to Zacharias, Luke i. 22; and the same word is applied generally to the prophecies of Isaiah, Nahum, and Obadiah. The prophets were able to distinguish these visions from common dreams, and from the delusions of Satan: see 1 Sam. xvi. 6, 7; 2 Sam. vii. 4—17; 1 Chron. xvii. 3—15; Isa. xxxviii. 1, 4—8; 2 Kings xx. 1, 4—11. These visions would always be consistent with the wisdom, holiness, and majesty of God.

The expressions used by the prophets, often imply that they saw the events they describe, as though they were actually occurring before them. Thus, Nahum sees the overthrow of Nineveh, Nah. iii. 1—3. Isaiah sees the revellings, the sudden surprise and massacre of the Babylonians, and the fall of her monarch, Isa. xxi. 1—10; xiv. 4—23. Habakkuk beheld in vision a most glorious display of Divine power, shown both in magnificent and in minute circumstances. The mountains trembling, the nations scattered, and even the tents of the wild Arabs agitated

and hastily removed, as is common at the approach of some mighty conqueror; see Hab. iii.

It may be remarked, that these ecstatic visions seem to have represented at once, events both near and remote, with a general idea of succession only, not a precise view as to the intervals to occur between them. Thus we behold the stars in the firmament, all apparently at distances nearly equal from us, as seen by the eye. Thus we see the towers and spires of a distant city rise from the horizon at once to view, without being able clearly to discern their intervals from each other. This may explain why the prophets often speak of future events as present; and of those which were fulfilled shortly after the times when they prophesied, as though connected with events which we consider as yet unfulfilled.

Maimonides states, that belief in prophecy precedes belief in the law, and describes the mode of revelation to the prophets: "As in wisdom one wise man may be greater than another, so in prophecy one prophet may be greater than another prophet. All of them see, however, the apparition of prophecy in a dream only, in a vision of the night, or on some day when deep sleep falls upon them, Numb. xii. 6. Moreover, the limbs of all of them shake at the time when they are prophesying, their bodily power fails, and their mind, undisturbed by any other impression, is left to conceive that which it sees, as is declared of Abraham, Gen xv. 12, and of Daniel, x. 8. The things thus revealed are revealed to them by way of allegory; but the interpretation is also at once impressed upon their minds, so that they know what it means; as the ladder which Jacob saw; the living creatures and the roll Ezekiel saw; the almond tree Jeremiah saw; and the ephah Zechariah saw: and so it was with the other prophets; some, like these, related the allegory, and also gave the interpretation, others told the interpretation only, and sometimes they related the allegory only."

The highest degree of inspiration was a direct communication to the mind of a prophet; this the Jewish writers would restrict to Moses, to whom the Lord spoke face to face, Exod. xxxiii. 11. They considered, and still

consider him, as the greatest prophet ever yet raised up in the world. The confession of faith used in the later ages of their state declares, "that all the prophecies of Moses our master are true; and that he is the father of all the sages, whether they went before or after him." And the Jews expect that the Messiah will be a prophet "like unto Moses," considering him as the triumphant deliverer of his people. Upon this part of the character of their law-giver they dwell, even as Stephen, Acts vii. 37, referred to the same passage, Deut. xviii. 15, but enlarged upon that part of his history which represents him as suffering for his people. There appears no cause for this limitation to Moses. A direct communication also appears to have been sometimes made by a voice to other prophets, as to Samuel. The ministry of angels has already been mentioned. At times a prophet could not refrain from delivering his message, even when it seemed disadvantageous to declare it, see Jer. xx. 7—10; but it is probable, that usually, when charged with a Divine communication, he was directed or led to select the opportunities most suitable for the purposes in view.

A prophet, when called to stand forth among his countrymen, to reprove sin, to warn of judgments to come, and to set forth the Divine promises, was about to enter upon a course both difficult and dangerous. The history of Jeremiah fully shows this, and few have read the minute and graphic description of his sufferings in the dungeon, unmoved, Jer. xxxviii. But the Divine protection was promised, and if wicked men were suffered to prevail, a better recompence awaited the prophet than any earthly advantage. He had to manifest, in his life and conversation, that he dedicated himself wholly to his office. His apparel was simple, and his food coarse. Isaiah wore sackcloth, Isa. xx. 2. Elijah was clothed in skins. The appearance of Elisha probably occasioned the scoffs and mockery of the youths of Jericho; and a faithful minister of the truth, appearing in a similarly marked garb, or publicly reproving with the same faithfulness, would most likely meet a like reception at the present day. By this plain and self-

denying course of life their disinterestedness was manifested, as in the instance of Elisha and Naaman.

From many circumstances it is plain, that the prophets often possessed the respect and regard of persons of the first rank in the state. Elijah and Elisha commanded this even from the wicked kings of Israel; Isaiah had extensive influence with the good king of Judah, Hezekiah. Nor did he hesitate boldly to deliver his message, even when the rulers of the land were men of a different stamp. The reproof to Shebna, Isa. xxii. 15—25, is supposed to have been delivered publicly to him, when one of the idolatrous ministers of Manasseh, and at a time when probably he was superintending the erection of some stately monument, thinking thereby to perpetuate his memory. Some consider that this solemn personal warning was so resented by the wicked ruler, that he caused the prophet to be put to a cruel death, by being sawn in sunder by a wooden saw, which is the Jewish tradition respecting the martyrdom of Isaiah. But the most remarkable instance of political power and influence enjoyed by a prophet, is that of Daniel. The fearlessness with which he put his life at stake, rather than cease from the worship of God, at a time when he enjoyed the highest honours of the realm, shows the excellent spirit he was of; see Dan. vi. The conduct of the princes to Jeremiah, chap. xxxvi. 19, proves the respect and regard manifested to him, even by the courtiers of Jehoiakim. That chapter also shows, that the messages or discourses of the prophets sometimes were delivered publicly in the temple. Many passages confirm these statements, and the reverence required towards the prophets and their messages, 2 Chron. xx. 20. and xxxvi. 16; proving that the neglect and ill-treatment many among them experienced, added much to the national guilt. Their words were often confirmed by the exhibition of miracles, as in the case of Moses; and at other times by judgments, immediate or shortly to come to pass, as in the instances of Jeroboam, whose hand withered, the captain sent to take Elijah, and the death of Hananiah, Jer. xxviii. 17.

Divine messages were often conveyed or exemplified by

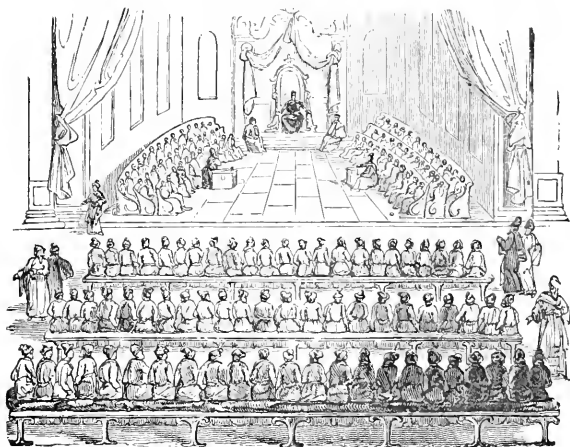


the outward actions of the prophets. Thus Ezekiel was directed to lie on his side and perform actions representing the siege of Jerusalem. Jeremiah wore yokes, broke a potter's earthen vessel before the elders, and buried a girdle. Isaiah went barefooted and without his upper garment for a long time. The attention with which these symbolie actions were received, evidently shows that the people were aware that the distinguished persons by whom they were performed, acted under a Divine impulse. Some of these actions are supposed by several writers to have been representations in visions, but there does not appear sufficient evidence for such a supposition, or at most, in very few instances.

The importance of the prophetic mission rendered care as to ascertaining the reality of the Divine inspiration the more necessary. From Deut. xiii. 1—5, and xviii. 20—22, it was evident that false prophets would arise; and the severest penalty, that of being put to death, was the punishment such pretenders were to suffer. Yet there are numerous instances of such characters, and of the mischief they effected: the reader will recollect Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, 1 Kings xxii. In the latter days of Jewish history, the sanhedrim, or great council, investigated with much strictness the claims of all who assumed to be prophets; and many who wore the prophet's garb, the rough garment, see Zech. xiii. 4, only to deceive, were severely punished. In former times, false prophets had also been visited severely, both with Divine judgments and human punishments, see Jer. xxix 21—26; and during both periods it is evident that true prophets suffered under false accusations; our Lord himself appears to have been treated as a false prophet. The inquiry made respecting John the Baptist, John i. 19, seems to have been by a deputation or commission from the sanhedrim, sent to examine his claims to the prophetic office. And some of the discourses of our blessed Lord, recorded by St. John, are supposed to have been delivered by him, when questioned before the sanhedrim.

The sanhedrim did not exist in the time of the kings, but probably was instituted by the Maccabees. This

council was composed of seventy or seventy-two members. Learned men, not yet admitted to the number of the sanhedrim, were permitted to be present. The particulars relating to this council more properly belong to an account of the laws of the Jews. Here it is only requisite to say, that the sanhedrim sat at first in the temple, in the room



called Gezit, half of which was within the space called the Hail, and half in the court of Israel, with a door into each. The council sat in the former part, as it was the tradition that none but kings of Israel might sit within the court of Israel. By the door from the Hail, criminals were brought in; but the sanhedrim entered by the door from the inner court, and in that part the priests cast lots and offered prayers, as already mentioned. The sanhedrim continued to sit after the hours of morning service, but were forbidden to enter upon any new matter in the night; a rule which they broke in the case of our Lord; as also another, not to seek for evidence, and the elders not only endeavoured to find witnesses against him, but suborned false

witnesses. The names of the presidents of the council are enumerated by the Jews; among them are Simeon, supposed to have been the same who took Jesus in his arms in the temple, Luke ii. 28, and Gamaliel, under whom Paul was brought up. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were members of the sanhedrim; the mention of the latter, John vii. 50—52, doubtless describes a debate in the sanhedrim, and notices the power then exercised of judging concerning prophets.

The jurisdiction of the sanhedrim extended to many other matters. Thus the first reaping, about the time of the passover, did not begin till the messengers of the sanhedrim had ordered it. The husbandman inquired, "Shall I reap?" They said unto him, "Reap." Some suppose there is an allusion to this custom in Rev. xiv. 15.



## CHAPTER XX.

## SECTS AND ORDERS OF MEN—IDOLATRY—CONCLUSION.

AFTER the Spirit of prophecy ceased, various religious sects sprung up among the Jews. The most important was the sect of the PHARISEES, so called from their pretending to more than ordinary sanctity and strictness in religion. This, for the most part, was but outward show, as is evident from the words of our Lord, Matt. xxiii. 25—28, where he compares the Pharisees to whited sepulchres, and expressly says, “Ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” Josephus describes the Pharisees as assuming to be more pious and devout than others, and to interpret the law with greater accuracy. The precise date of the origin of this sect is not known, but the Pharisees soon obtained vast reputation and power. About eighty years before Christ, king Alexander Jannæus, when on his death bed, advised his wife to conciliate the Pharisees, since that would be the way to secure the affections of the nation for herself and her children; for whether they spoke truly or falsely, or reported good or evil of any one, they would be believed by the people. She followed his advice, and the Pharisees supported her authority and interest. The influence they possessed, and even the censures passed upon them by our blessed Lord, show that they were outwardly what would be called respectable and devout characters, commanding respect by their profession and general demeanour. The words of our Lord to his disciples were, that their righteousness must exceed (surpass) that of the Pharisees. The appellation was then accounted honourable; it was a sort of proverbial saying, that if but two persons entered heaven, one of them would be a Pharisee.

The main feature of their errors was, that they set up what they called the traditions of the elders, and represented them to be of the same authority as the Divine law; thus in reality making the commandment of God of none effect by their traditions, as our Lord declared, Matt. xv. 6. By explaining the law according to these tradi-

tions, they easily perverted it to their own views, although directly opposed to the Divine will. This is fully exemplified by their rules respecting the sabbath, already noticed. These traditions were not regularly committed to writing till the second century after Christ, when they were embodied in the work called the Mishna, from which several quotations have been made in these pages.

The Pharisees, in effect, placed the whole of religion in outward ceremonial observances, and had no desire for that purity of heart, without which none shall see God, Matt. v. 8. They indulged in pride and malice, and all sorts of spiritual wickedness; this often naturally led to secret licentiousness in practice. A striking proof is recorded, John viii. 9; every one of the pharisaical accusers became a self-condemned criminal, on hearing the heart-searching appeal of our blessed Lord. Their outward displays of piety and charity, were literally what our Lord condemns; they prayed standing at the corners where streets met, and where they might be observed by the passengers in each; and they caused trumpets to be sounded to give public notice of the distribution of their alms.

In their dress, the Pharisees also affected many peculiarities. The phylacteries, or pieces of parchment with



texts inscribed thereon, worn upon their foreheads, or on

their arms, were made broader than among the other Jews. This practice was founded upon a mistaken literal interpretation of Deut. vi. 8, which directs to bind the law for a sign on their hands, and to let it be as frontlets betwixt their eyes; evidently a metaphorical charge to remember the Divine word, and to meditate thereon. They also enlarged the borders of their garments Matt. xxiii. 5; they made the fringes or tassels particularly large. These fringes the Jews were commanded to wear, to distinguish them from other nations, Numb. xv. 38, 39. One of their rabbis, in commenting upon this passage, says, "When any man is clothed with a fringe, and goeth out therewith to the door of his habitation, he is safe; God rejoices, the destroying angel departs, and that man shall be secured from all hurt and destruction!" This may suffice as a specimen of the lying glosses and traditions of the Pharisees. If the reader wishes for more, he will find many related by Lightfoot and Gill. It is unnecessary to enlarge upon the errors and blasphemies of this sect. We can easily conceive that such minds must have been opposed to our Lord and his doctrines. They disapproved of the religion of the heart taught by our Lord, on account of the spirituality of its nature, the universality of its requirements, and the purity of its principles. Having set their carnal hearts upon worldly glory and temporal deliverance, they scorned the miracles and doctrines which were directed to the healing of the bodies and souls of men, and they ceased not to persecute the Messiah, till they brought him before their sanhedrim, and upon false evidence condemned him as an imposter.

One extreme commonly leads to the opposite; those who fall into either, often equally depart from the truth. Thus the **SADDUCEES** were careless and profligate in their outward conduct, as the Pharisees were over strict. They equally rejected the pure self-denying doctrines of Christ, and joined their enemies, the Pharisees, in persecuting and putting to death the Lord of life and glory. Our Lord cautioned his disciples equally against the doctrines of both, Matt. xvi. 6, 12. The Sadducees, like many other sects, owed their origin to a perversion of that which is

right and good. Sochrens, a man of authority, about 250 years before Christ, impressed upon the minds of his scholars, that they should serve God purely from love and gratitude to him, not from an interested desire of reward, or a servile dread of punishment. One of his followers, named Sadoc, not rightly understanding this doctrine, taught that there was no future state of rewards and punishments. The Sadducees in the time of our Saviour were not a numerous sect, but they were rich and powerful. Their tenets were, in effect, those of the careless worldlings of every age, seeking after present pleasures, by indulging the lusts of the flesh, and driving away the thoughts of eternity. Yes: there is many a Christian Sadducee! We need not go far to find those who deny Christ by their works and doctrines, while they call themselves by his name; to say nothing of the sensual and bigoted infidel, who is a Sadducee in doctrine as well as in practice. The Sadducees much resembled the heathen epicurean philosophers, and joined the Pharisees in rejecting the spiritual kingdom of our Lord, because they desired to share the worldly glory of an earthly monarch. They did not believe in the resurrection, nor in the separate existence of the soul; they contended for free-will, and denied any particular interference of Divine providence. We need not farther notice their impious blasphemies.

The HERODIANS were a political rather than a religious party. They were so called because they were willing to agree with Herod, in submitting to a foreign and heathen power, and in some respects to adopt heathen customs and idolatrous practices. By the "leaven of Herod," Mark viii. 15, probably is intended a willingness, from worldly policy, to participate in any thing wrong. This party, it is supposed, were mostly Sadducees.

The ESSENES are not directly named in the New Testament, but are thought to be referred to in some passages, as Col. ii. 18—23, and are noticed by Philo and by Josephus. They were free, both from the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, and the open profligacy of the Sadducees. They rejected the traditions, and were more strict as to moral conduct than as to ceremonial observances. They offered

gifts at the temple, but not sacrifices. They lived in a state of equality, and only followed agriculture, or such mechanical arts as were of a peaceful nature. None of them would be concerned in acts of violence or warfare, nor would they make weapons of war. But these laudable and good principles were carried out into a blameable austerity; and their doctrines were mixed with many superstitions, which are reprov'd by the apostle in the passage above mentioned. They also were imbued with spiritual pride, though of a different character from that of the Pharisees. The THERAPEUTÆ were a branch of the Essenes, who resided in Egypt, and were still more rigid in their observances, strictly avoiding intercourse with other men.

The SCRIBES were an order of learned men. The name is not that of a sect, but of an office. They were of the tribe of Levi, and their professed business was to write copies of the law. But it is thought that some scribes for civil purposes, were of other tribes, mostly of Simeon. Before the invention of printing, the employment of a scribe was honourable and profitable. The scribes were also expositors of the law. When prophecy had ceased, they took upon themselves to interpret difficulties in the sacred books. Hence they assumed considerable authority, and possessed great power in a nation still professing to be regulated according to the letter of the Divine law. Our Lord includes them with the Pharisees, Matt. xxiii. 2, as sitting in Moses' seat, assuming the authority of the legislator to themselves, but binding heavy burdens, and laying them on men's shoulders, teaching the commandments of men, jangling and disputing about verbal interpretations and trivial matters, instead of explaining and urging the Divine precepts.

The office of scribe among the modern Jews is important. As the copies of the Scriptures used in their public worship must be written, not printed, there is employment for them, and the following account of one of these copyists, by Henderson, shows the absurd and superstitious observances required to be practised by these men, which, under pretence of preserving accuracy, and promoting respect



to the Divine word, has done much to prevent its circulation. While at Dubno, in Russia, Dr. Henderson wished to obtain some Hebrew manuscripts, and was conducted to the house of a sopher, or scribe. On the table before him was an open roll, from which he was copying; parchment and writing implements were lying about. He gave a minute account of the rules he was required to observe, which are the same now as 1300 years ago, when they were prescribed in the Talmud. The skins used must be those of clean animals, and prepared only by Jews. When cut even, and sewed together by thongs of the same material, they are divided into columns, the breadth of which must not exceed half their length. Before the scribe begins, and after every interruption, he must compose his mind, that he may write under a due impression of the sanctity of the words he is transcribing. He must copy with the utmost exactness; if any letter is wrongly placed, or wrongly shaped in the original, he must copy the blunder. Any of his faults may be corrected if amended within thirty days, but not afterwards; if altered subsequently, the copy is stigmatised as “posel,” or forbidden. When writing the name of Jehovah, the scribe must not leave off till it is finished, even though a king should enter the room, nor may he begin it with a fresh dip of ink, he must supply his pen when writing the first letter of the preceding word. This scribe exhibited the appearance of a man worn down by the observance of these and other minute rules. For a copy of the law written fairly, he asked about ten pounds. To the intrinsic value and spiritual beauty of the law of the Lord he appeared totally insensible. The outward beauty of these transcripts of the Pentateuch sometimes is very great; the letters appear as uniform and regular as if printed, and this exactness, though carried to such an extent as often to be frivolous, has been the means of keeping the Divine law pure and unaltered through more than thirty centuries.

The **LAWYERS** and **DOCTORS OF THE LAW** were the same as the scribes. The titles, **RAB**, **RABBI**, or **RABBAN**, signified great, or master, and were given to learned men among the Jews. In later times, they were conferred as

degrees are in our universities, and with much ceremony. A key was delivered as a symbol of the power and authority conferred, and the rabbi wore it as a badge of this honour; also a book of tablets was given to him, symbolical of diligence in his studies. Rabban was the highest of these titles: it was regularly ascribed to only seven of the principal Jewish doctors, one of whom was Gamaliel. Rabboni, the title by which Mary called our risen Lord, John xx. 16, signified the same. To omit the title of rabbi, was the grossest affront to any one on whom it had been conferred. Our Lord forbade his disciples to use it, that they might not assume to themselves to lord over the consciences of men, nor set up for infallible guides of other men's consciences, Matt. xxiii. 8.

The RULERS were chief priests, and of course from the tribe of Levi. The ELDERS were chiefs of other tribes.

The SAMARITANS were a sect or division of the Israelites, formed by the union of the idolatrous colonies, planted in Israel by the Assyrian conquerors, with the inhabitants of the land. See 2 Kings xvii. 24—41, where their origin, as well as the idols they worshipped, are particularly mentioned. After the captivity, Nehemiah began a reform, see chap. xiii. when some of the Jews, who had married heathen wives, went to the Samaritans, and settled among them. One of these was Manasseh, a son of the high priest, who persuaded the Samaritans to renounce many of their idolatries, and built a temple on Mount Gerizim, where rites were celebrated resembling the worship at Jerusalem. In the days of our Lord, the hatred between the Jews and Samaritans was at its height. They had no dealings with each other, John iv. 9. They opposed each other when passing through their respective countries, Luke ix. 52, 53, and the title of Samaritan was applied to our Lord by the Jews, as including or implying all that was bad, John viii. 48.

The GALILEANS were a political faction in Galilee, who resisted the Roman power, and sought religious liberty by force of arms, in the time of Augustus. The ZEALOTS and SICARII, or murderers, Acts xxi. 38, were similar bodies of political enthusiasts, shortly before the destruction of

Jerusalem. The PUBLICANS, almost every reader must know, were the tax-gatherers, or collectors of the public revenue, under the Roman government, and generally were infamous for their rapacity and extortion. This will explain the manner in which they are spoken of in the Gospels. Yet our Lord declares that they were more ready to receive his word than the bigoted, prejudiced Pharisees : and Matthew, one of the apostles, obeyed the summons of our Lord, left this lucrative calling, and followed him. So also did Zaccheus turn to the Saviour, and received him into his house, Luke xix. 1—9, manifesting the sincerity of his repentance by restoring fourfold what he had taken wrongfully ; also by giving largely to the poor.

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The subject of this work being the Rites and Worship of the true God, we need not go into any details respecting the idolatrous rites practised by the Jews when they worshipped the host of heaven, and idols the work of men's hands, like the neighbouring nations. Many particulars are mentioned in the books of Kings and of Chronicles, which have been explained and commented upon by learned men, but the subject is hateful and disgusting : the rites of idol worship ever have been similar, and consist of observances pleasing to Satan. Idolatrous worship in any form is an express breach of the law of God ; as such it should be abhorred, and not considered merely as rites and ceremonies. The Jew could not bow down to an idol, in whatever form, any more than a Christian, without his conscience testifying that he thereby broke his allegiance to his Lord and God.

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Let us not close this subject without another reference to the ancient people whose records have supplied the subject for these pages. Can we think of the glories of their former state, and view their present degraded condition—can we think of them, once illustrious as the covenanted people of Jehovah, a nation of kings and priests unto God, now degraded in their circumstances, and still

more in their habits and pursuits; for the most part a wretched sordid people; still retaining some of their outward national forms, while their souls are immersed in the pursuit of worldly gain—can we see these things, and not be mindful of their first origin, and the promises of the future restoration of the Jewish nation? In the words of an old writer, “Let us who, upon their casting away, were reconciled to God, pray for their resurrection from the dead, that so the blindness that is happened unto Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, may be visited with the Day-spring from on high, that even unto them the Deliverer may come out of Zion, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob; that they who have continued many days without a king, and without a prince, and without sacrifice, may seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days; that so both Jew and Gentile, having one Shepherd, and making one fold, may worship Him in the New Jerusalem that cometh down from above, wherein dwelleth righteousness, when the new heavens and the new earth shall be manifest, where there is no temple to be seen, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.”

We also add the beautiful lines—

Yes, Salem, thou shalt rise; thy Father's aid  
Shall heal the wounds His chastening hand has made;  
Shall judge the proud oppressor's ruthless sway,  
And burst his brazen bonds, and cast his cords away.  
Then, on your tops shall deathless verdure spring,  
Break forth, ye mountains, and ye valleys, sing.  
No more your thirsty rocks shall frown forlorn;  
The unbeliever's jest, the heathen's scorn;  
The sultry sands shall tenfold harvests yield,  
And a new Eden deck the thorny field.

*Hebr.*

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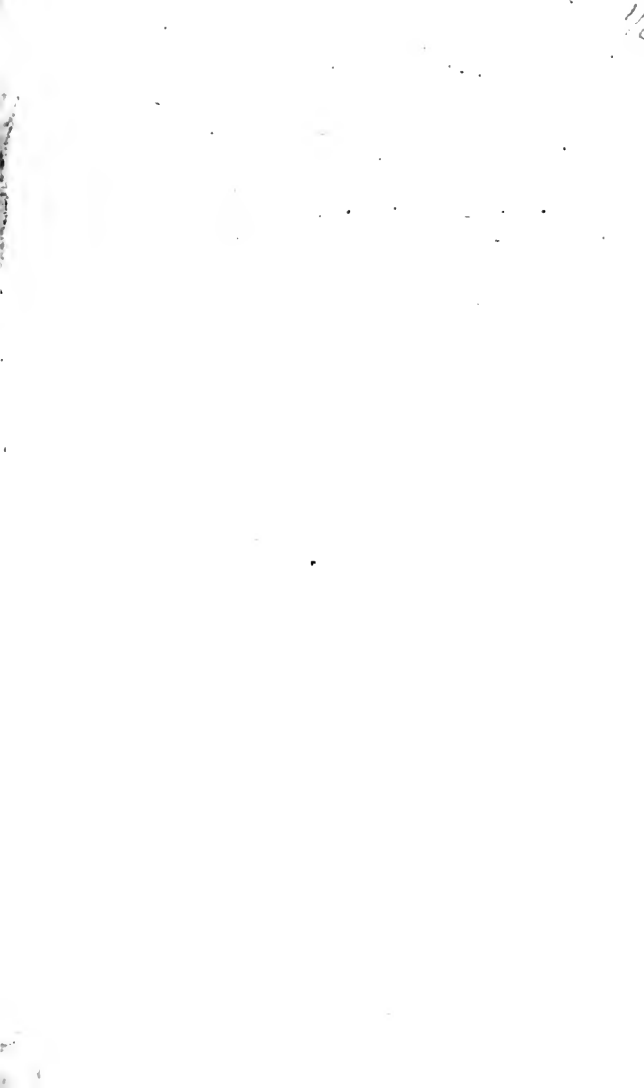
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